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Byzantium and the Bosporus

A Historical Study, from the Seventh Century BC until the Foundation of Constantinople

Thomas Russell

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A Historical Study, from the Seventh Century BC *until the Foundation of Constantinople*

THOMAS RUSSELL

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Preface

In AD 330 the Emperor Constantine consecrated the new capital of the eastern Roman Empire. Today his city has become a bustling, international metropolis located at the crossroads of Europe and Asia, and the histories of Constantinople and Istanbul are well known. Yet comparatively little is known about the city before it was Constantinople, when it was a minor Greek *polis* located on the northern fringes of Hellenic culture at the Black Sea, surrounded by hostile Thracian tribes, and denigrated by one ancient wit as the 'armpit of Greece'. Despite its problems, ancient Byzantium possessed one unique advantage: control of the Bosporus strait. This strategic waterway links the Aegean to the Black Sea, and confers on its possessor the ability to tax shipping passing through the strait; that is, all maritime traffic passing between the Aegean and the Black Sea.

This book presents a historical study of the relationship between the city of ancient Byzantium and the Thracian Bosporus, a relationship which shaped the region's history. Viewed through this lens, the history of the Bosporus sheds light on the nature of economic exploitation and ancient imperialism, and on the nature of ancient communities' local identities. Drawing extensively on Dionysius of Byzantium's *Anaplous Bosporou*, an ancient account of the journey up the Bosporus, local inscriptions, and by exploring regionally specific geographical features in the strait, it illustrates how the history of this region cannot be understood in isolation from its geographical context. Not so much a history of ancient Byzantium, this is a meditation on regional particularism, revealing the pervasive influence which this waterway had on its local communities.

Acknowledgements

This monograph began life as a DPhil thesis undertaken at St Hilda's College, Oxford, and I have incurred many debts over the years spent conducting the research and in the process of transforming the thesis into a monograph. Peter Thonemann was an ideal supervisor, and his influence and ideas are apparent on every page. Without his direction and advice, the conceptual focus and scheme of my work would never have materialized. For the topic itself, I owe particular gratitude to David Whitehead, who originally suggested a history of ancient Byzantium.

Other thanks are due to Katherine Clarke, my college supervisor at St Hilda's, who read and commented on sections of the thesis. Alfonso Moreno and Robin Osborne examined the thesis, and provided me with valuable observations, changes, and improvements, many of which were incorporated into the final monograph. Robert Parker and Neil McLynn also made useful comments at the formal stages of progression through the thesis, while Rosalind Thomas, who supervised the transition from thesis to monograph, made a number of very useful suggestions and improvements which helped to shape the monograph into its current form. I would also like to thank Michael Scott for his thoughts on Dionysius during a seminar on regional histories at Leicester in September 2016.

For financial assistance during the research, I am indebted to St Hilda's College and the Classics Faculty at Oxford, for a research scholarship which made the project possible. The Craven fund at Oxford and St Hilda's College provided funding to travel to Turkey during my research. I am also indebted to Volker Heuchert and the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, who generously granted access to their coin collection and gave permission to include pictures in the monograph. Gabe Moss, at the Ancient World Mapping Center, very kindly produced maps of the Bosporus and the Propontis for use in the book, and I am extremely grateful to him and to Richard Talbert. The map was produced by the Ancient World Mapping Center; the toponyms were selected based on Dionysius' itinerary, and their placement is based on those of C. Foss, in Map 53 of the Barrington Atlas. Our intention is that a more detailed digital, interactive version of the Bosporus map will soon be available at http://awnc.unc.edu/awmc/applications/periplous

Nathan Miller kindly provided an image of a coin from his own collection for use on the cover, for which I am very thankful.

I follow personal preference when transliterating Greek proper names, aiming only for some degree of internal consistency.

The thesis was submitted in summer 2013 and examined in October 2013. It was submitted to Oxford University Press at the end of December 2015. I was particularly pleased to make use of Adrian Robu's recent monograph on Megara and the colonies (Robu 2014a) in the book. However, transformation of the thesis into monograph form has had to compete with my day job and a heavy teaching load, and I am sure that my efforts to make use of more recent items have not been comprehensive.

My deepest thanks are to A, for extraordinary patience and support, and to whom this book is dedicated.

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List of Abbreviations

AE	*L'Année Épigraphique*, published in *Revue Archéologique* and separately (1888–).
Ann. Arch. Mus. Istanbul	*Annual of the Archaeological Museums of Istanbul (Istanbul Arkeoloji Müzeleri Yıllığı)*, I– (1949–).
ATL	B.D. Meritt, H.T. Wade-Gery, and M.F. McGregor (eds.) *The Athenian Tribute Lists* 1–4 (Princeton, 1939–53).
BE	*Bulletin épigraphique*, published in *Revue des études grecques* (1888–).
Beloch, *Gr. Ges.*^{2}	K.J. Beloch, *Griechische Geschichte*^{2} I–IV (Strasbourg, Berlin, and Leipzig, 1912–27).
BSP	*The Black Sea Pilot. The Dardanelles, Sea of Marmara, Bosporus, Black Sea, and Sea of Azov*. United States Hydrographic Office (Harvard, 1920).
Busolt, *Gr. Ges.*	G. Busolt, *Griechische Geschichte: bis zur Schlacht bei Chaeroneia* I–II (Gotha, 1893–1904).
CAH^2	*Cambridge Ancient History*^{2} (1961–).
CIG	*Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum* 1–4, ed. A. Boeckh (Berlin, 1828–77).
Const. Porph. *De Them.*	Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De Thematibus*, ed. A. Pertusi (1952).
CPG	E.L. von Leutsch and F.G. Schneidewin (eds.) *Corpus Paroemiographorum Graecorum* 1–2 (Hildesheim, 1958).
De Byzance à Stamboul	Ö. Nazan, *De Byzance à Stamboul. Un port pour deux continents. Galeries nationales (Grand Palais-Champs-Élysées). 10 octobre 2009–25 janvier 2010* (Paris, 2009).
Dion. Byz.	Dionysius of Byzantium, *Anaplus Bospori*, ed. R. Güngerich (1958).

FGrHist	F. Jacoby, *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker* (Berlin, 1923–).
Firatlı-Robert	N. Firatlı, *Les stèles funeraires de Byzance Gréco-Romaine avec l'édition et l'index commenté des epitaphes par Louis Robert* (Paris, 1964).
From Byzantion to Istanbul	Sakıp Sabanci Museum, *From Byzantion to Istanbul. 8000 Years of a Capital. June 5–September 2010. Sabancı University* (Istanbul, 2010).
GGM	C. Müller, *Geographi Graeci Minores* 1–2 (Paris, 1861).
Head, HN^2	B.V. Head, *Historia Numorum: A Manual of Greek Numismatics*^{2} (Oxford, 1911).
Hornblower, *ACT*	S. Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides* 1–3 (Oxford, 1991–2008).
Hsch.	Hesychius Illustrius of Miletus, *FGrHist* 390.
IACP	M.H. Hansen and T.H. Nielsen (eds.) *An Inventory of Archaic and Classical poleis* (Oxford, 2004).
IApameia	*Die Inschriften von Apameia (Bithynien) und Pylai*, ed. T. Corsten (IK 32 [Bonn, 1987]).
IByz	*Die Inschriften von Byzantion*. I, *Die Inschriften*, ed. A. Łajtar (IK 58 [Bonn, 2000]).
IDelos	*Inscriptions de Délos* 1–7, eds. F. Durrbach, M. Launey, P. Roussel, et al. (Paris, 1926–72).
IEphesus	*Die Inschriften von Ephesus*, eds. R. Merkelbach, J. Nollé et al., 7 vols in 8 (IK 11–17 [Bonn, 1979–81]).
IG	*Inscriptiones Graecae* (Berlin, 1873–).
IGBulg	*Inscriptiones Graecae in Bulgaria repertae* 1–5, ed. G. Mihailov (Sofia, 1956–97).
IGCH	M. Thompson, O. Mørkholm, and C.M. Kraay, *An Inventory of Greek Coin Hoards* (New York, 1973).
IHeraclea	*The Inscriptions of Heraclea Pontica*, ed. L. Jonnes, with a *Prosopographica Heracleotica* by W. Ameling (IK 47 [Bonn, 1994]).

IK	*Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien*, Kommission für die archäologische Erforschung Kleinasiens bei der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Institut für Altertumskunde der Universität (1972–).
IKalch	*Die Inschriften von Kalchedon*, ed. R. Merkelbach (IK 20 [Bonn, 1990]).
IKios	*Die Inschriften von Kios*, ed. T. Corsten (IK 29 [Bonn, 1985]).
IKyzikos	*Die Inschriften von Kyzikos und Umgebung* 1–2, ed. E. Schwertheim (IK 18, 26 [Bonn, 1980, 1983]).
IOSPE	*Inscriptiones antiquae orae septentrionalis Ponti Euxini graecae et latinae* 1–3, ed. V. Latychew (St. Petersburg, 1885–1901).
ISamothrace	*Samothrace*, 2, part I, *The Inscriptions on Stone*, ed. P.M. Fraser (*Bollingen Series* LX. 2, I [New York, 1960]).
ISM	*Inscriptiones Scythiae Minoris. Graecae et Latinae* 1–3, eds. D.M. Pippidi et al. (Bucharest, 1980–99).
LGPN	*A Lexicon of Greek Personal Names* 1–6, ed. P.M. Fraser, E. Matthews, et al., (Oxford, 1987–).
LIMC	*Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae* 1–7 (Zurich, Munich, Dusseldorf, 1981–).
Lindos	C. Blinkenberg, *Lindos. Fouilles et recherches, 1902–1914* 1–2 (Berlin, 1931, 1941).
LSJ	H.G. Liddell and R. Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon.*[9] (Oxford, 1996), rev. H. Stuart Jones (1925–40), suppl. by E.A. Barber et al. (1968).
Maiuri, *NSER*	A. Maiuri, *Nuova silloge epigrafica di Rodi e Cos* (Florence, 1925).
MAMA	*Monumenta Asiae Minoris antiqua* 1–11 (1925–62, 2014).
ML	R. Meiggs and D.M. Lewis, *A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions to the End of the Fifth Century B.C.*, rev. ed. (Oxford, 1988).

Par. Syn. Chron.	*Parastaseis Syntomoi Chronikai*, eds. A. Cameron and J. Herrin (Leiden, 1984).
P. Cair. Zen.	*Zenon Papyri*, eds. CC. Edgar et al., 2 vols (*Columbia papyri, Greek series*, 3–4 [New York, 1934, 1940]).
PECS	R. Stillwell (ed.) *The Princeton Encyclopaedia of Classical Sites* (Princeton, 1976).
Preger, *IGM*	T. Preger, *Inscriptiones Graecae metricae ex scriptoribus praeter Anthologiam collectae* (Leipzig, 1891).
Ps.-Scymnus	Ps.-Scymnus, *Περίοδος γῆς*, ed. D. Marcotte (Paris, 2002).
RE	A. Pauly et al. (eds.) *Real-Encyclopedie der klassischen Alterumswissenschaft* (Stuttgart, 1893–).
RO	P.J. Rhodes and R. Osborne, *Greek Historical Inscriptions, 404–323* BC (Oxford, 2003).
Robert, *Coll. Froehner*	L. Robert, *Collection Froehner I. Inscriptions grecques* (Paris, 1936).
Robert, *Hell.*	L. Robert, *Hellenica. Recueil d'épigraphie, de numismatique et d'antiquités grecques*, 1–13 (Paris, 1940–65).
Robert, *OMS*	L. Robert, *Opera Minora Selecta: épigraphie et antiquités grecques* 1–7 (Amsterdam, 1969–90).
Rostovtzeff, *SEHHW*	M. Rostovtzeff, *The Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World* 1–3 (Oxford, 1941).
Schönert-Geiss	E. Schönert-Geiss, *Die Münzpragung von Byzantion, Teil I: Autonome Zeit, Teil II: Kaiserzeit* (Berlin and Amsterdam, 1970–2).
Script. Orig. Const.	T. Preger (ed.) *Scriptores originum Constantinopolitanarum* (Leipzig, 1901).
SEG	*Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum* (Leiden, 1923–).
SGDI	H. Collitz and G. Bechtel, *Sammlung der griechischen Dialekt-Inschriften*, 4 vols. in 5 (Göttingen, 1884–1913).

SNG	*Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum*, British Academy (1936–).
*Syll.*³	W. Dittenberger, *Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum*³ 1–4 (Leipzig, 1915–24).
Walbank, *HCP*	F.W. Walbank, *A Historical Commentary on Polybius* 1–3 (Oxford, 1957–79).

Introduction

The Armpit of Greece

> Though all other cities have their periods of government, and are subject to the decays of time, Constantinople alone seems to claim to herself a kind of immortality, and will continue a city, as long as the race of mankind shall live either to inhabit or rebuild her.[1]

> Many ages before Constantine, one of the most judicious historians of antiquity had described the advantages of a situation, from whence a feeble colony of Greeks derived the command of the sea and the honours of a flourishing and independent republic.[2]

This book presents a study of the relationship between the ancient city of Byzantium and the Thracian Bosporus over a period of around 1,000 years. Chronologically, its scope extends from the original settlement of the city by Greek colonists in, probably, the seventh century BC, to the consecration of Constantinople on the site of old Byzantium in AD 330. Strictly, it is not a city history: its theme is not the history of the city in a narrow sense, but Byzantium's dynamic relationship with its immediate environment. Moreover, the chronological termini are sufficiently broad to permit the treatment to move backwards and forwards through time as necessary. No attempt is made to adhere to strict chronological order. Instead, it identifies and examines broad historical continuities and themes over a long period

[1] Pierre Gilles, *De Topographia Constantinopoleos*, Preface 8 (Grélois, 270). Transl. Ball (1729) 12.

[2] Edward Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ed. J.B. Bury, Vol. II (1896) 141.

of time. Neither is any attempt made to be comprehensive. This is a deliberate attempt to eschew positivism, and to avoid falling into the genre of what Moses Finley labelled a spate of 'pseudo-histories', 'in which every statement or calculation to be found in an ancient text, every artefact finds a place, creating a morass of unintelligible, meaningless, unrelated "facts"'.[3] Instead, this is a reflection on the variability of the ancient world, and on the pervasive impact which their local environments had on Greek communities.

Byzantium's colourful future as an imperial metropolis can make it difficult to penetrate the history of the earlier city. Edward Gibbon's description of Byzantium's situation is part of a long tradition, begun in antiquity and continued by modern visitors to Constantinople and Istanbul, which emphasizes the determining importance of the city's geographical position. For Gibbon, it was primarily to its location that Byzantium owed its wealth, its political influence and, ultimately, its commercial pre-eminence. This sentiment is expressed in more romantic terms by the *voyageurs* of the modern age. Gilles' 'immortal' city became a common trope: Tournefort claimed that 'its [i.e. Constantinople's] situation, by consent of all travellers, and even the ancient historians, is the most agreeable and the most advantageous of the whole universe'.[4] According to this view, Byzantium was *destined* to become a world capital, enjoying an unrivalled position at an important crossroads of land and sea routes. Located on the Bosporus strait, separating the Black Sea from Greece, and Asia from Europe, the city was the central hub in a network of trading routes—traders travelling by land from the interior of Asia Minor, or from Greece to Asia, were forced to pass through the city; while as one of the two maritime chokepoints between the Aegean and the Black Sea, it enjoyed a constant through-trade and could levy tolls and taxes on shipping by closing the strait at will. It *inevitably* developed into a bustling and economically vibrant metropolis.

Such sentiments owe much to hindsight, but derive originally from ancient sources written long before Constantine's birth. According to Herodotus, in a famous anecdote, the Persian Megabazus ridiculed the founders of Chalcedon on the opposite bank as 'blind' for overlooking

[3] Finley (1985b) 61.

[4] Tournefort II (1741) 151. For similar sentiments in the modern travel literature, cf. Grelot (1683) 58–9; Ebersolt (1986) 9; Murray (1878) 47; Andreossy (1828) 238; von Hammer I (1822) 2; Millingen (1899) 4.

the more favourable site of Byzantium.[5] In the most extensive ancient treatment of the advantages of Byzantium's situation, Polybius, that 'most judicious historian' mentioned by Gibbon, claimed that the Byzantines gained a reputation as 'common benefactors of all' (*κοινοὶ εὐεργέται πάντων*), because the natural advantages of their city allowed them to control and secure Greco-Pontic trade, keeping it out of the hands of hostile barbarians, and performing a benefaction to the rest of Greece.[6] As Gibbon shows, these sentiments are not confined to the modern travellers. The geographical advantages of the city are commonly invoked as tools of historical explanation: Constantine's choice of the site was an obvious one, given its natural advantages, and the earlier city is commonly described by modern historians as a 'metropolis waiting to happen'.[7]

Yet this kind of geographical determinism is not the same thing as historical explanation. Geography can create only potential advantages; it requires human interaction to take advantage of them, and it is deeply problematic to use geography as an explanatory tool without exploring the complex processes of interaction between communities and their environment which are the subject of this study. Such a view also overlooks the difficulties and dangers of life at the Bosporus, and the impact which these had on the local communities. Such generalizations, in short, by assuming the city's geographical advantages as self-evident, do not tell us *how* the Bosporus impacted on Byzantium and the other local communities, simplifying to the point of meaninglessness the multifaceted interactions between those communities and the strait. Furthermore, Byzantium possessed a large *chora* which in the Hellenistic period stretched west as far as Perinthus, to the east beyond Chalcedon, and encompassed regions along the southern shore of the Propontis. It also, in partnership with Chalcedon, controlled the length of the Bosporus as far north as Gypopolis at the

[5] Hdt. 4.144.2. A later version can be found in Strab. 7.6.2 and Tac. *Ann.* 12.63.

[6] Pol. 4.38. For similar ancient sentiments, cf. Dio Cass. 75.10, and Zosim. 2.30.2.

[7] For the phrase: von Eijende (2011) 1. Janin (1964) 1 remarks: 'If Constantinople has, in every age, been one of the most important crossroads of the planet, it is primarily because of the exceptional geographic position which it enjoyed (transl. mine)'. Cf. *RE* III (1889) 1116–19, 1126 (Oberhummer); Merle (1916) 1–2; Newskaja (1955) 22; Freeman (1950) 262 ('its singular good fortune in being settled as Constantine's capital was really due to the perspicacity and courage of the unknown founders, who planted their settlement on a site so superb'); Lehmann-Hartleben (1923) 49; Miltner (1935) *passim*; Schönert-Geiss I, p. 1; Isaac (1986) 215–16; Krautheimer (1983) 42; Berger (2011) 1.

mouth of the Black Sea. This region, as we know from local sources, was comprised of numerous small communities and villages, each with their own local stories, myths, traditions, and economies. These encompass the strait and Byzantium, the neighbouring cities and villages (Chalcedon, Perinthus, Heraclea, Astacus, Selymbria, Rhegion, Chrysopolis, Delkos), and Byzantium's overseas possessions (the southern and south-eastern Marmara).

Polybius is partly responsible for the prevailing assumptions about Byzantium which modern historians adopt. Though not isolated, Polybius' description, as the lengthiest description of the region in a mainstream ancient source, is afforded the most weight by modern authors. As I argue in Chapter 5, it is likely that the central significance given to Byzantium in treatments of the Black Sea was ideologically derived: the Greek Byzantines, worldly benefactors, utilized their nature-given advantages to protect Greek trade from the predatory encroachments of non-Greek pirates. It is also likely that this view was encouraged by the Byzantines themselves: a competitive local rivalry existed at the Bosporus, in which Byzantium, Chalcedon, and other local communities contested the epichoric myths and legends of the Bosporus.[8] It is no coincidence that every ancient account of the excellence of Byzantium's location makes explicit the contrast with 'inferior' Chalcedon. Very likely, Polybius' account and the others derive originally from local sources.

Much more useful is precisely such a source: Dionysius of Byzantium's treatise the *Anaplous Bosporou*.[9] This text gives few references to specific historical events, and its main concern is with the topographical details of the Bosporus.[10] Yet to ask exclusively historical or topographical questions of this source is to ask the wrong questions, and to miss the value of a unique and rich source. Dionysius, a local writer, is in reality only tangentially interested in topographical information, using it as a façade behind which he paints a picture of a legendary, mythological landscape along the shores of the Bosporus. The epichoric myths and traditions which lie behind his topographical explanations are the true core of the work. Few of these are found

[8] Cf. Chapter 1.2.

[9] The nature of this text is discussed further in Chapter 1.

[10] Historical references: §§14 (Darius and a Philip of Macedon burning local temples), 41 (the divinization of Ptolemy II in the city), 57 (Darius' crossing), and 92 (the sale of Hieron by an official of Seleucus II or III).

in other ancient sources: Dionysius' sources were therefore either local, now lost writers, or, more likely, his own knowledge of the region, passed down through personal experience and oral tradition.[11] These stories reveal a region saturated with traces of the voyage of the Argo, the passage of Io, and other less well-known local traditions, as well as a patchwork of extra-urban sanctuaries. Such information tells us much about how these communities, mainly living outside the *astu* at Byzantium, conceived of their identities and their heroic past, while Dionysius' unique obsessions with the currents, promontories, the landmarks used by sailors, and the Bosporus' fishing grounds highlight the issues which conditioned these communities' responses to life at the strait.

Furthermore, praise of Byzantium was not universal, nor even representative of ancient outside observers. To most, Byzantium remained a backwater at the far northern limit of Greece: a frontier city, surrounded by ferocious Thracians and populated by alcoholic merchants and fishermen; hardly the centre of the universe. Theopompus, speaking of a seizure of Chalcedon by Byzantium, claimed that the Byzantines spent all their time in the agora and the tavern, and he criticized the Byzantine democratic constitution for contributing to the Byzantines' licentious mode of living and drunkenness; defects which, he claims, were exported to Chalcedon when Byzantium's democracy was imposed there.[12] It was a common trope among the ancient sources to make Byzantium the butt of jokes. The wit Stratonicus referred to the city as the 'armpit of Greece'.[13] Menander composed an epigram on the topic of Byzantine drunkenness.[14] While Byzantium's position on the Bosporus may have created potential natural advantages, the romantic tendencies among modern travellers and historians mean that we rarely get a glimpse of the difficulties or dangers of life in this area. A more realistic view is reflected in these derogatory comments: Byzantines were thought to live a tough, frontier life at the edge of the

[11] It is possible that Dionyius used a source in common with the later Hesychius of Miletus, who wrote a *Patria* of the legendary history of Constantinople and its precursor: so Berger (2013) 285 n. 3. It is equally possible that Hesychius simply used Dionysius himself.

[12] *FGrHist* 115 F 62 = Athen. 12.526e.

[13] Athen. 8.351c: *καὶ τὸ Βυζάντιον μασχάλην τῆς Ἑλλάδος*. It is worth noting that Stratonicus had personally visited Byzantium (Athen. 8.349f–350a).

[14] Athen. 10.442d. Cf. Freely (1996) 14–18 for an overview of ancient jokes about Byzantium. Note also Menander, *Samia* 96–112, discussed in Chapter 1.1.

Greek world; to have had regular dealings with barbarian chieftains, and to have been forced to contend with shipwrecks and with the sea. All of this drove them to drink and lechery. Stratonicus had visited the city, and Menander was writing jokes which were meant to resonate with people who had perhaps travelled there on business. To most outsiders, Byzantium remained a dangerous, foreign, and smelly place, if a lucrative trading destination.

One reason that I have chosen to examine Byzantium and the Bosporus in this study is the availability of the evidence. Dionysius of Byzantium's *Anaplous* permits a vivid reconstruction of the region's history, of the local identities possessed by the Byzantines, and, most importantly, of the city's relationship with the strait. Another reason is that Byzantium, the future site of Constantinople, would evolve into a world capital. Yet save for scattered hints (and excepting Polybius' remarkable digression) the economic importance of the strait during its earlier history rarely surfaces in ancient texts or modern treatments. By structuring this study around the interrelationship between strait and city, and exploring aspects of the Bosporus' history which were shaped by this relationship, it becomes possible to understand more fully the economic significance of the strait in antiquity. Moreover, in this way it is possible to overcome the problems typical of local, city histories. A simple catalogue of events and the uncritical, positivistic assemblage of evidence ('fact collecting'), as Finley complained, answers few questions other than purely antiquarian ones.[15] One alternative approach is to explore what made a region or a city unique. This can only be answered in terms of regional specificity—the local features which separated one area from another and which defined the identities of the local communities, determined the commodities which the region produced and sold, and around which the rhythm of the local economy revolved. If these were products of their environments, they cannot be understood or uncovered by extrapolation from more well-known examples or by the application of typologies. By appreciating the unique features of a given region, and how they influenced the historical development of human communities living there, it is then possible to use this local perspective to gain fresh insights into topics of wider significance than the purely local.

[15] Finley (1977) 325.

Though Finley's disregard for local history is not widely accepted today, the danger of generalization engendered by disregard for local circumstances remains. Alain Bresson's monumental *L'économie de la Grèce des cités* (Paris, 2008) provides a useful example.[16] Bresson's neo-institutionalism proposes a structural approach to the ancient economy. In this model, ancient economic institutions responded to unique contexts, and understanding the structures of these institutions makes it possible to understand how they reacted to economic stimuli and pressures (so Lytle). Yet this and other recent theoretical approaches fail to fully overcome the problem of generalization: in Bresson's model the structures of institutions are often viewed as universal, operating according to shared assumptions and functioning in similar ways in varied contexts. In fact, the ancient economy was comprised of innumerable and varied *economies*, each with radically different contexts and constraints which must be taken into account. As Cartledge notes, 'students of ancient Greek economic life are faced with the problem of generalizing usefully about a world of more than a thousand separate political units, which were on the whole radically self-differentiated'.[17] Attempts to draw conclusions about economic institutions on the basis of evidence from individual regions rest on the assumption that those institutions functioned similarly everywhere, an assumption which cannot always be taken for granted. Bresson's discussion of ancient fishing, for example, draws on evidence from Byzantium and a few other choice examples (Troezen, Cos, Iasos, Delos) to argue that salting and fishing were routinely the subjects of state monopolies.[18] What is not taken into account is the extent to which Byzantium's fishing industry was atypical, based on specific, local features which were not replicated elsewhere.[19] It is difficult, Davies observes, to account for the wide diversity of behaviours and institutional practices of Hellenistic economies.[20] One way forward is to begin by identifying appropriate regions; then attempting to understand what features of their local economies were 'typical' and which were 'atypical', specific to their region. It is the latter with which this study is concerned, and

[16] See especially Bresson's ch. 1, which outlines his theoretical approach, with E. Lytle's *BMCR* 2009 review.

[17] Cartledge (2002) 13.

[18] Bresson I (2008) 183–93.

[19] Noted by Lytle in his 2009 *BMCR* review; cf. Chapter 4.

[20] Davies (2001) 32.

once these features have been established to be unique to their local areas they can be excluded from more general approaches, and used instead to add nuance to our understanding of other phenomena.

The methodology followed here owes much to Horden and Purcell's *Corrupting Sea*. Their view of the ancient Mediterranean is that it is characterized by dense fragmentation: a 'continuum of discontinuities', which embraces 'a definition of the Mediterranean in terms of the unpredictable, the variable and, above all, the local'.[21] In this conception, no two regions functioned in the same way, and the only way to begin to craft anything approaching a comprehensive picture of the ancient Mediterranean is to attempt to fit individual regions into networks of interaction and exchange. Such a high level of variability from one region to another inhibits attempts to impose models on the ancient economy, or to generalize across regions. It is for this reason that Gehrke's attempt to uncover the Greek 'Third World', his response to Finley's criticism of local history, *Jenseits von Athen und Sparta: das dritte Greichenland und seine Staatenwelt* (Munich, 1986), is not wholly satisfactory. Gehrke, as Hornblower notes, organizes his treatment of ancient *poleis* according to Finleyan typologies: agricultural states (e.g. Boeotia-Thebes, Chalcis, Thessaly), agrarian states with maritime components (Megara, Chios, Mytilene), maritime states, states with particular special features, such as minerals (Thasos) or marble (Paros), religious centres (Delphi), or trading states (Aegina). The fundamental problem with such typologies is inflexibility. Each city or region is far too complex to be safely categorized under one heading or another. Was Thasos a *polis* with special features (mines), an agrarian *polis*, a trading city, or some other ideal type (so Hornblower)?[22] The case for each typology could legitimately be made for virtually every *polis*: Byzantium could be classified as a trading city, an agrarian state, a city with a fishing-based economy, or a *polis* with special features (the ability to impose tolls on shipping). Instead, perhaps it is necessary to embrace the high level of variability in the ancient world, and to engage closely with the realities of life before superimposing generalizing schema and typologies. By establishing these 'realities of life', it is possible to get a picture of what commodities the region could and could not produce, the level to which it was integrated with neighbouring regions, and to build from this basis a

[21] Horden and Purcell (2000) 13.
[22] See the comments by S. Hornblower in his review, *CR* 38 (1988) 87–9.

wider picture. Peculiar local features, especially the dangers and difficulties of life at the Bosporus, were, I shall argue, much more important in influencing the economic and social development of Byzantium than its oft-cited natural advantages. These peculiar local features, deeply buried in hidden and out-of-reach contexts, escape any generalizing schema.

Over a long period of time, similar recurrent and observable patterns apparent in the Bosporus' history reveal long-term historical continuities deriving from regionally specific features in and around the strait. The contention of this study is that these historical continuities, deriving from the interplay between strait and city, played a significant role in Byzantium's historical development and the character of the identities projected by its inhabitants. This is not the same thing as citing the city's geographical advantages as an explanatory tool, as Gibbon did, without further comment. Not every aspect of Byzantium's history can be reduced to geography, and I make no effort to do so. By sacrificing comprehensiveness, it is possible to focus only on those topics which can be usefully understood through the lens of local specificity. The Bosporus, I shall attempt to show, was a 'machine like no other', and its history can perhaps only be understood properly through a close analysis of its local features.

Throughout the first half of Chapter 1, I outline what I understand to be the most important of the local conditions specific to the Bosporus, and which created a series of observable historical continuities: the currents and winds of the Bosporus, the dangerous promontories, the deceptive shallows and harbours. These combined to make the strait a treacherous place for sailors, generating a peculiar rhythm for shipping in the region, as sailors were forced to bulk at certain ports and natural indentations along the Bosporus while awaiting changes in the currents or winds. This in turn created a guaranteed, seasonal through-trade of large fleets of ships which allowed the city and other sites to serve as the locations of customs houses designed to tax Black Sea trade. Furthermore, the great number of merchants passing through the strait attracted opportunistic predators, generating in turn the demand for a benefactor or protector. This role was filled in the first place by imperial powers, and later by the city itself, as it assumed responsibility for maintaining the safety of this passage for shipping. In short, as a consequence of these features the region developed into an economic resource, since

control of the strait brought with it the ability to tax or to protect Greco-Pontic trade.[23]

Precisely how the region was exploited as an economic resource is then explored in Chapters 2 and 3. Chapter 2 consists of an examination of the Athenian Empire's attitude toward the Bosporus and Propontis, the Hellespontine tribute district, which situates the Athenians' activities within their historical and geographical contexts. The earlier actions of Pausanias and Histiaeus, and later of Clearchus and Philip II at the Bosporus, I argue, can be usefully understood when these individuals are explored in their immediate geographical context, and in relation to the Athenian Empire: each used piracy or the monopolization of force in an attempt to exploit the unique potential of the region, to cut off or control the strait, and to further their own interests. The actions of the Athenians in the region should not be kept distinct from the activities of these 'illegitimate' powers, for although the Athenians legitimated their activities by their naval dominance and the establishment of an imperial 'bureaucracy', or something approaching it, their motives and methods were essentially the same. The mechanisms put in place at the Bosporus by the Athenians built on earlier precedents, and were in turn emulated by Thrasybulus, the Byzantines themselves, and Philip of Macedon. Such policies could be put in place at the Bosporus because conditions around the strait encouraged an extraordinarily high level of imperial involvement—the massed ships passing through the strait, regularly and in convoy, required the protection which only Athens' naval empire could offer.

The intensity of the Athenians' involvement at the strait would serve as the Byzantines' own precedent in the following centuries. In Chapter 3, I continue my exploration of the financial exploitation of the region by examining the economic history of Byzantium and Chalcedon in the third and second centuries BC. The numismatic evidence reveals a peculiar historical episode: the apparent existence of a complex monetary system and alliance established by both cities during this period, which utilized Attic coinage alongside

[23] Rubel (2009) is an exploration of the history of tolls on shipping established at the Bosporus over a period of around 1,000 years, ranging from the Classical to Byzantine periods. Rubel argues (at p. 337) that the levying of tolls was the normal state of affairs at the Bosporus throughout its history, because of the economic significance of the region.

lower-weight local issues in concert with countermarks to derive a profit from the exchange of currency. This appears to have been, similar to the Attalid cistophoric coinage or the currency system in Ptolemaic Egypt, a 'closed' economic system. Yet while the Attalid and Egyptian systems were imposed from above, by a ruling power over a large kingdom, this system was limited to the relatively small area around the Bosporus, and was confined to this region and to Byzantium's overseas possessions. The role of the Ptolemies in creating this system is considered in connection with third-century Ptolemaic ambitions in the north Aegean, and the chapter builds upon the previous chapter to argue that the Ptolemies in cooperation with the Byzantines attempted to revive the old policies of the Delian League. Their anomalous position in the Hellenistic period and the capacity for the cities of the Bosporus to establish a closed-currency system, with the help of a Hellenistic kingdom, was another symptom of the Bosporus' regional specificity. Whereas anywhere else a 'closed' currency system needed to be enforced by royal edict, the geographical features of the Bosporus permitted the cities to do the same without coercion, relying instead on the merchants who by necessity had to bring their coinage through the strait.

Chapter 4 explores the fishing industries along the strait. In the chapter, I argue against Gallant's minimalist assessment of ancient Mediterranean fishing, and against David Braund's suggestion that fish referred to as 'Byzantine' fish by literary sources were, in fact, caught in the Black Sea by non-Greeks but called 'Byzantine' in an attempt to 'Hellenize' the fish trade.[24] Instead, I argue that the availability of fish in the Bosporus was, like the ability to tax the strait or establish a controlled currency system, another of the peculiar local commodities of the area. Using epigraphic evidence for local fishing guilds, modern traveller accounts, and Dionysius of Byzantium, I identify areas in the Bosporus where fish shoal *en masse*, on regular, seasonal migrations, driven into gulfs by the currents, and argue that the regularity and availability of these fish permitted large-scale exports from Byzantium. This was, as the chapter contends, exceptional, supporting Lytle's argument that fishing was not routinely subject to state monopolies, a move possible only in a few specific areas, such as enclosed straits where fish shoal, like the Bosporus.[25]

[24] Gallant (1985); Braund (1995).

[25] Lytle (2006) and (2012).

These case studies are designed to explore Byzantium's relationship with the Bosporus, and the role this played in the city's history and the Propontic economy: quotidian realities deriving from the Byzantines' existence along the Bosporus. However, this study also explores the 'identity' of the local communities of the Bosporus, especially as this was determined or conceived in connection with their physical environment. The 'identity' of a Greek city or community, I argue, must be viewed as multi-layered and highly artificial. It is not enough to point to similarities between cities founded during the periods of Greek colonization, and to classify their cultural identities in colonial terms. The very notion of colonial identity and the data used by modern scholars to support it are cultural constructs, artificially preserved by the communities themselves for specific reasons. Aside from the colonial heritage of a Greek city, I therefore attempt to understand other, equally important, facets of Byzantium's 'identity', especially as this was shaped by the city's physical environment.

The second half of Chapter 1, which deals with the relationship between geography and cultural identity, illustrates the numerous ways in which the communities of the Bosporus connected themselves with the strait and its epichoric traditions, leading to an intense but friendly civic rivalry between Byzantium and Chalcedon, in which the two cities each attempted to outdo the other's connection with the strait. Association with local mythologies—the passage of the Argonauts or the crossing of Io—legitimated the cities' dominance of and control of the strait, permitting them to portray it as the preservation of free shipping through the dangerous narrows. This local perspective then enables a fuller understanding of the rationale behind other identities projected by the Byzantines, explored in Chapters 5 and 6.

In Chapter 5, I examine how Greek identity was defined and preserved in a *polis* located at the entrance to the Black Sea, and which had a notoriously complicated relationship with its non-Greek neighbours. By examining the city's cults and festival calendar, and by analysing the potentially distorting effects of our literary and epigraphic sources which deal with the relationship between Greeks and non-Greeks in the Black Sea, I argue that the anachronistic assumptions about the local non-Greek peoples of the Black Sea—Thracians, Scythians, Getae, Heniochi, etc.—reflect a deep-rooted anxiety about the city's status. The dubious honour of being the 'first' city of Greece naturally meant that the city was also the last, and, I argue, the Greeks of Byzantium actively attempted to define themselves in

opposition to their non-Greek neighbours. How, if they could not prevent barbarian enemies, real or imagined, from reaching the strait and endangering Greek shipping, could the Byzantines deserve their reputation as 'common benefactors'?

Developing this theme, in Chapter 6 I question whether it is possible to reduce Byzantium's local identity to the institutional and cultural relationship between a mother-city and its colony.[26] Institutions, cults, legends, even script and dialect—what Thucydides would call a city's '*nomima*'—far from acting as objective, neutral pieces of evidence, represent instead conscious attempts to forge a colonial identity, so important to a Greek city in the Black Sea. Though the *nomima* of Byzantium, its closest neighbour Chalcedon, and the other Pontic Megarian cities show undeniable traces ('footprints') of their founder, can we truly use this evidence to posit a specific moment of foundation by a particular founder? I argue that Robin Osborne's model of Greek colonization, which views it as a long process rather than as a specific event, may offer a more appropriate way to interpret the contradictory stories in the literary sources for Byzantium's early settlement than the traditional view of a Megarian 'foundation', while appreciating the undeniable involvement of Megarians (among others) in this process.[27] If correct, difficult foundational traditions provide very little evidence of the historical period of colonization, since many of them were invented at a much later date; instead, they carry great value in showing how the Byzantines conceptualized their city's birth at a later date—how they *chose* to view their past, and from whom they chose to claim descent. From this perspective, the Megarian *nomima* themselves need not reflect a specific 'moment' of foundation. They show that many of the people who came to settle on the Golden Horn came from Megara, but whether they came at once or if they arrived over a long period of time and in a haphazard manner, mixed in among people from other places, is unclear. It is for this reason that this is the final chapter. Foundational stories become, viewed in this way, another method by which the city determined its identity, this time in terms of stereotypical foundational stories incorporating familiar 'ktistic' tropes which tied Byzantium to the heroic age and to the great colonizing

[26] For treatments of the Megarian colonial network, cf. Hanell (1934), Robu (2012) (2014a).

[27] Osborne (1998). A similar argument is made by Braund (1994) 73–87 for Georgia.

poleis of central Greece, reinforcing the city's Hellenic, and specifically Megarian, credentials.

By approaching the history of Byzantium in this manner, from the perspective of the city's relationship with its environment and the ways in which its inhabitants presented themselves, I have attempted to differentiate this study from earlier works on the city. Heinrich Merle's *Die Geschichte der Städte Byzantion und Kalchedon* (Kiel, 1916), written at the start of the last century, is the most accessible of modern monographs on Byzantium. However, it is now outdated. Moreover, its preoccupation is with military and political narrative, and no pretence is made to have accomplished anything more than to reconstruct as well as possible a narrative history of the city from the surviving literary sources. Narrative does not strictly concern me except as far as it can illustrate Byzantium's relationship with the strait: the manoeuvres of Alexander's successors around Byzantium or the course of Philip II's siege tell us nothing *specific* about Byzantium; much more informative is the fact that Philip and the successors were attracted to the region in the first place, and Philip's siege of Byzantium and seizure of the grain fleet at Hieron are treated here as evidence for the regional economy of the Bosporus rather than in military or political terms.[28]

[28] Modern bibliography on Byzantium is not particularly extensive. For general overviews of Byzantium's history, see: Isaac (1986) 214–37; L.D. Loukopoulou and A. Łajtar, *IACP* no. 674; Freeman (1950) 251–63; Cartledge (2009) 167–75; *PECS* s.v. Byzantium; Archibald (2013) 237–45. A recent treatment of Byzantium's relationship with Chalcedon is Robu (2014c). Very useful are synoptic treatments of the Greek settlements in Thrace and the Pontus in relation to their mother-city, e.g. Hanell (1934), Loukopoulou (1989b), Robu (2012). Adrian Robu's recent monograph on Megara and her colonies, Robu (2014a), is of great value, especially on institutions, colonization, and onomastics. Gabrielsen (2007), which deals with the role played by the Bosporus in determining Athens' fifth-century involvement in the region, is an extremely useful modern treatment of the role played by the strait in the city's history. My Chapter 2 attempts to build on Gabrielsen's conclusions, and Chapter 3 extends his approach to the following century. Moreno (2008), which deals with Hieron at the northern mouth of the Bosporus, is another exception to the modern tendency to overlook Byzantium's physical environment. Regrettably, I have been unable to consult the unpublished thesis of Jacques Dumont: 'Byzance, cité grecque', thèse de IIIe cycle, Poitiers, 1971. The most comprehensive treatment of Byzantium's political history and literary sources remain the entries by Oberhummer, Miller, and Kubitschek in *RE* III (1889) cols 1115–58 s.v. Byzantion. On the physical development of the city and Constantinople, Mango (1985) is essential. On the city's early contacts with Rome, note Gryzbek (1980) and Mattingly (1983).

Apart from Merle, another monograph on Byzantium falls short on entirely different grounds. W.P. Newskaja's *Byzanz in der klassischen und hellenistischen Epoche* (Leipzig, 1955; transl. from the original Russian edition: Moscow, 1953), written during the Cold War, displays all the superficiality and aggressive ideological bias of the Soviet era. Newskaja's dismissal of 'bourgeois scholarship' ('die bürgerliche Wissenschaft'), referring to western scholarship, undermines the effort. Beyond an ideological agenda, Newskaja (like Merle) produced precisely the kind of local history which Finley cautioned against. Any and all evidence available was included and treated uncritically, but no effort was made to explore the city's relationship with its surroundings or the nuances of the inhabitants' identities. As the Roberts noted, Newskaja made no effort to familiarize herself with the territory of the city, with the local village communities, or the natural resources available in the hinterland.[29]

A disclaimer on the sources used throughout this study is necessary here. Aside from Dionysius of Byzantium, who comes with his own unique problems, there exists no other detailed ancient treatment of Byzantium or the Bosporus, and the ancient literary sources naturally only deal with the city in passing.[30] My chronological termini span a millennium and the chapter arrangement is thematic rather than chronological, meaning that literary sources ranging from Herodotus to Byzantine *Patria* accounts are utilized, sometimes simultaneously. The epigraphic evidence is likewise scanty and incomplete. Most importantly, very little archaeological evidence has survived from ancient Byzantium, since the site of the city has been in continual occupation until the present day.[31] I endeavour to pay due attention

[29] The Roberts' review (*BE* 1958: 320, pp. 271–6) amounts to a manifesto of the issues with which a treatment of Byzantium ought to engage: the local inscriptions, traveller accounts, geography, and numismatics. Cf. Hampl's review in *Gnomon* 29 (1957) 154–5 and Robu (2014c) 187–8 for similar criticisms.

[30] Lost local sources: Leon of Byzantium's *τὰ κατὰ Φιλίππον καὶ Βυζάντιον* (Suda s.v. *Λέων* = *FGrHist* 132); Demetrius of Byzantium's work on the Celtic invasions of 278/7 BC (Diog. Laert. 5.83 = *FGrHist* 162); Damon of Byzantium's *περὶ Βυζαντίων* (Athen. 10.442c = *FGrHist* 389); Pompeius Trogus' *origines Byzantii* (Pomp. Trog. Prol. 9). A later source dealing with the mythical history of Byzantium from the perspective of the reign of Justinian is Hesychius of Miletus' *Patria Constantinopoleos* (*FGrHist* 390). For a recent translation of Hesychius, see Berger (2013).

[31] The major exceptions are the funerary *stelai* from the Hellenistic and Roman city published in Firatlı-Robert, with Clairmont (1967). On funerary *stelai* from ancient Chalcedon, note also Asgari and Fıratlı (1978). What few archaeological finds have been made from the old city are kept in the Istanbul Archaeological

to the problems with using late evidence, comparative material, or traveller accounts whenever these problems arise.

Despite these problems, fresh treatment of the Bosporus is demanded by advancements in the source material in the last fifty years. A synthesis of the coinage of Byzantium is now available: E. Schönert-Geiss, *Die Münzprägung von Byzantion I–II* (Berlin, 1970–2). Schönert-Geiss omits the posthumous Lysimachi minted by the city during the Hellenistic period, but taken in conjunction with the thesis of Constantin Marinescu, *Making and Spending Money along the Bosporus* (1996), the numismatic sections of Chapter 3 are possible.[32] Moreover, a collection of the inscriptions of Byzantium has now been produced: A. Łajtar, *Die Inschriften von Byzantion* (Bonn, 2000).[33] Taken with the epigraphic corpora of other neighbouring cities, especially those in or around the Bosporus (Chalcedon, Perinthus, Heraclea, Apameia, and the Bithynian cities), the local inscriptions offer a view of village life, cult and ritual practices, and information on local institutions. Finally, I draw on modern traveller accounts, primarily Pierre Gilles' sixteenth-century *De Bosporo Thracio* (1561), and J. von Hammer's *Constantinopolis und der Bosporos* (1822), both of which provide geographical description and anecdotal evidence of the region following the course of Dionysius' itinerary.

In what follows, I hope to show that the history of Byzantium should not be considered in isolation from the city's geographical context. Throughout, the pervasive impact which the Bosporus strait had on the city's history, on the rhythm of the region's economy, and on the creation of the communities' identities is revealed. This is not, of course, the only way to approach a history of Byzantium, and has no pretensions of being anything like a final word on the city. I hope, however, that the long-term historical continuities which this monograph reveals illustrate how ancient history, especially economic and cultural history, must appreciate the little details. In this way,

Museum, and published in the exhibition *From Byzantium to Istanbul* (*De Byzance à Stamboul*). Recently, evidence of prehistoric human occupation in the region has been discovered at Lake Küçükçekmece, around 20 km west of Istanbul, the site of a later Byzantine *hekatostys* (civic subdivision) called Bathonea: Aydingün and Rose (2007), Aydingün (2007), (2009), Aydingün and Oniz (2011), Erhan and Eskalen (2011).

[32] A useful review of Schönert-Geiss is Le Rider (1971).

[33] Used in conjunction with Brixhe, *BE* 2001: 308, Sève, *AE* 2000: 1359, and *SEG* L, 663–7bis.

I attempt to show that through local history it is possible to build a picture of the ancient world from the ground up, beginning with the intricacies and unique features of the regions themselves, before fitting each altogether exceptional region into the complex and kaleidoscopic fabric of interactions which comprised the ancient Mediterranean. Though this local perspective can never be fully comprehensive, it can, occasionally, be used to shed new light on wider topics.

1

The Land of Inachus

> When I took it upon myself to describe the New Constantinopolitan Rome, I decided that first it was necessary to describe the Bosporus, the original creator of Byzantium—nobler and even more outstanding than Byzas, who founded this city.[1]

Before undertaking to write his account of Constantinople and its antiquities (*De Topographia Constantinopoleos*), published in 1561, the French naturalist and traveller Pierre Gilles thus found it necessary to begin by exploring the strait on which the city was located. It is likewise impossible to examine the history of ancient Byzantium in isolation from its physical circumstances and historical geography, or without exploring the city's relationship with the Thracian Bosporus. This 17-mile strait, 700 m wide at its narrowest point (Rumeli Hisarı, the ancient Hermaeum, or Pyrrhias Kyon), separates Asia from Europe, and connects the Black Sea with the Sea of Marmara, the ancient Propontis. With the Dardanelles, the Hellespont, it served the function of connecting the Aegean and the Mediterranean to the Black Sea (see Fig. 1.1).

Byzantium's position on the southernmost European promontory of the Bosporus, the modern Serail (ancient *Βοσπόριος ἄκρα*, the 'headland of the Bosporus'), has been praised since antiquity. Bathed on three sides by the Bosporus, the Marmara, and the Golden Horn (the ancient Ceras), the city was vulnerable to attack only over its narrow western isthmus which opens toward eastern Thrace—Procopius described the effect as a garland of sea crowning the city.[2]

[1] Pierre Gilles, *De Bosporo Thracio*, Preface 1 (Grélois, 58): *cum novam Romam Constantinopolitanam sim descripturus, mihi prius describendus videtur Bosporus, princeps creator Byzantii melior et praestantior quam Byzas huius urbis conditor.*

[2] *Aed.* 1.5.10: *οὕτω μὲν οὖν στεφανοῖ τὴν πόλιν ἡ θάλασσα.*

Fig. 1.1. The Bosporus according to Dionysius. *The Ancient World Mapping Center*, 2016. Toponyms and their placement follow C. Foss, Barrington Atlas, Map 53.

This triangular promontory, our ancient writers thought, which overlooks the mouth of the Bosporus, allowed Byzantium, and not its sister-city Chalcedon on the Asiatic coast of the Bosporus at Kadıköy, to dominate the strait and to profit from the ships passing in and out of the Black Sea.

At least, this is what our ancient sources claim.[3] It is a view which has often been followed by modern writers.[4] Early monographs on the city made little effort to move beyond Byzantium itself or to examine the strait alongside the city's large hinterland in European Thrace.[5] Instead, the city's dominating position upon the Seraglio Point is commonly cited as a reason for the city's high tribute payments to the Delian League in the fifth century, for earlier Greek colonization in the region, for the interest of Histiaeus, Pausanias, Philip II, and others in the city, and for Constantine's choice of the site for his new capital. As I shall argue in this chapter, much more significant than the situation of Byzantium was the combination of geographic and hydrographic features along the length of the strait. The effects of the underwater currents and alternating winds in the narrow, perilous strait set a very specific rhythm for maritime traffic, which had long-term economic consequences, shaping the historical development of the city and its surrounding communities. Furthermore, the natural risks posed to sailors in the strait, combined with the great number of ships passing through, placed peculiar demands on local and external authorities, causing patterns of historical continuity which manifest themselves across the region's history.

Though Polybius' description is by far the most oft-cited ancient description of Byzantium, our principal source for the topography of the ancient Bosporus—at least our main literary source—is the second-century AD treatise by Dionysius of Byzantium, the *Anaplous Bosporou*.[6] This is not a local city-history like Memnon of Heraclea's

[3] Note especially Pol. 4.38.1–10, 43.3–44.11. On the proverbial superiority of Byzantium's position to that of Chalcedon, the 'city of the blind', cf. Tac. *Ann.* 12.63, Strab. 7.6.2, and Hdt. 4.144.2.

[4] E.g. Isaac (1986) 216: 'Byzantion owed its pre-eminence first of all to the fact that it controlled all shipping passing between the Black Sea and the Aegean'.

[5] Note especially the programmatic statement of Merle (1916) 1, and the following extended quotation of Pol. 4.38. Compare the remarks of J. and L. Robert, *BE* 1958, 320, pp. 274–5 on Newskaja (1955).

[6] It is cited here according to the arrangement of chapters established by R. Güngerich (1927, repr. 1958), an improvement on the versions of C. Wescher (1874) and C. Müller in *GGM* II.

treatment of his home city, or the lost *Περὶ Βυζαντίων* of Damon of Byzantium (*FGrHist* 389), but is only tangentially concerned with the city itself. Dionysius' treatise is, instead, a description of the length of the Bosporus in minute detail, designed to give sailors the local knowledge necessary to avoid the perils of the strait, and to provide aetiological explanations for the names of various villages, *choria*, landmarks, shrines, and monuments along the shores. Dionysius uses the fictional pretence of speaking to a mariner standing on a ship, overlooking the shores as he passes north into the Pontus, and explaining the meanings behind each noteworthy site on what Belfiore calls an 'aetiological cruise'.[7]

Very little attention has been paid to this treatise, and those scholars who have examined it have tended to focus on individual passages for their relevance to isolated episodes of historical interest.[8] But Dionysius is not concerned to discuss events from the Bosporus' history except where they relate to his mythological aetiologies. Instead, Dionysius shows that the region around the Bosporus was comprised of numerous communities, *emporia*, and fishing villages, all of which were bound together by shared mythological histories and local traditions.[9] Unfortunately, the Greek manuscript tradition preserves only about two-thirds of this important work. The gap can be partially filled by the Latin paraphrase of Pierre Gilles, in his *De Bosporo Thracio libri III* (1561), the preliminary to Gilles' larger treatment of Constantinople's antiquities mentioned above (p. 19). It is a traveller account of the Bosporus based on Dionysius' itinerary, which combines the ancient source with personal autopsy.[10] Gilles, a manuscript hunter for François I, had in his possession a now-lost manuscript of Dionysius, which he quotes extensively if not always word-for-word. The long gap extends from Pyrrhias Kyon on the

[7] See on this Belfiore (2009) 67–8, 73–4 ('crociera eziologica'), 75, 291.

[8] E.g. Avram (2004) and Dumitru (2006). See also Robert (1978) 522–35, on Dionysius and ancient fishing in the Bosporus. On the genre to which the *Anaplous* belongs, *Küstenbeschreibung*, cf. Güngerich (1950). To my knowledge, the only modern translation of the work is Belfiore (2009). The most accessible modern discussion of Dionysius is Anca Dan's entry in the online Encyclopedia of the Hellenic World, Constantinople, www.ehw.gr: Dan (2008).

[9] On this see Belfiore (2009) 68–9, 73–5.

[10] Gilles' works are conveniently collected in French translation in Grélois (2007). I cite Gilles according to the original chapter divisions, with references to Grélois in parenthesis.

European shore to Moukaporis on the Asiatic—thus unfortunately including Dionysius' account of the Symplegades (Cyaneae), the 'clashing rocks' at the mouth of the Black Sea.

Dionysius' patriotic purpose is clear from the start. He begins his treatment in grand, Herodotean fashion, declaring that the journey into the Black Sea, a difficult undertaking, is marvellous and delightful only for those who experience it with their own eyes. His purpose, he claims, is to describe this sight to those who cannot see it for themselves; to share the wonders of this region with those who have not yet had the good fortune to experience it themselves:

> Since its audience gains nothing less from the sight, it seemed necessary for me to write about these things all together, so that for those who have seen them there may be nothing lacking for sake of full appreciation, while for those who have not seen them they may, at any rate, be able to learn at least a little about these things.[11]

Following a brief treatment of the dimensions of the Black Sea, the Sea of Azov (ancient Maeotis), and the Bosporus, Dionysius begins his account of the journey north from Byzantium, encompassing the Golden Horn and continuing to the mouth of the Black Sea, followed by the journey south to Chalcedon. He focuses on intimate, local details, often providing lengthy digressions on the mythology of particular spots. Whereas, for example, the *Periplous* of Ps.-Scylax gives minimal details, describing the next stage of the voyage and merely listing the communities and *poleis* existing there, Dionysius, like an overly enthusiastic travel guide, shows a palpable pride in displaying his local knowledge. He explains how sailors can overcome treacherous areas, why Bathykolpos, 'the deep gulf', was named such, or why the name Mellapokopsas, 'destined to strike', was appropriate for a promontory which weathered the thrust of the currents in the strait to form a sheltered anchorage.[12] His intent is to

[11] Dion. Byz. 1; cf. Hdt. Preface and 4.85.

[12] Dion. Byz. 20, 71. The etymology of Mellapokopsas is outlined by Grélois at p. 109: *μέλλειν* 'to be about to, destined', and *ἀποκόπτειν* 'to cut off, hew'. That is, the promontory cuts into the Bosporus to weaken its force. Probably, as accepted by Belfiore (2009) 68–9, Dionysius' detailed knowledge of the local area reflects the fact that he came from the region. The Suda (s.v. *Διονύσιος*) refers to Dionysius by the ethnic *Βυζάντιος*, but there is no real evidence that he actually came from the city

impress upon outsiders a sense of wonder at these local features and stories.

Just as important is the time devoted by Dionysius to aetiological and mythological explanations. His work is remarkable not only for the detail which it devotes to such a small area, but because it draws on a wealth of traditions native to the area, the author's own homeland. At each stop along the journey we are given an aetiological explanation for the local sites' and monuments' names, all of which relate back to epichoric legends. This is where Dionysius' true value lies. Our other sources, including Hesychius of Miletus and the other Byzantine *Patria* accounts, are Christian, familiar with a Bosporus whose pagan past has been lost to the advent of Christianity—shrines and sanctuaries transformed into churches.[13] Dionysius, who predates Constantine, offers a glimpse into the much earlier pagan mythological landscape.[14] The stories and myths to which he devotes so much time were, it will be argued, central to the identity of the communities along the Bosporus, representing an intimate identification between them and the strait itself. Local fishermen depended on the complex system of underwater currents to know where and when to fish, merchant sailors used the same phenomena to make their way through the narrows, and financial officials manipulated the currents to collect tolls. Consequently, a close regional association between the Byzantines and the strait developed. This regional identity found expression on coins, in onomastics, in myths and legends, and in historical geography, specifically the etymology of various toponyms (not least that of the Bosporus itself), as the Byzantines celebrated their connection with and economic dependence upon the Bosporus.

other than his intensely local knowledge of the region and his obvious enthusiasm at sharing that knowledge with others.

[13] Some vestiges of the Bosporus' pagan past were adapted by Christianity to ease the transition from paganism. We are only aware of some of these thanks to Dionysius. For example, the temple of Artemis Phosphorus (Dion. Byz. 35) stood in all likelihood on the site of the later Church of St. Claire or Photeine: Gilles, *De Bosporo Thracio*, 2.84–5 (Grélois, 126–7). On this topic, cf. Nicholson (2005).

[14] Dionysius can only be dated on internal and linguistic features. The lack of any reference to Septimius Severus, who razed Byzantium, provides a *terminus ante quem* of the late second century AD. On this, see Belfiore (2009) 68, 90, 296 and Dan (2008) at www.ehw.gr.

1.1 THE BOSPORUS AND ITS CURRENTS

ΔΗΜΕΑΣ: *μεταβολῆς αἰσθάνσθ' ἤδη τόπου, ὅσον διαφέφερι ταῦτα τῶν ἐκεῖ κακῶν;*
ΝΙΚΗΡΑΤΟΣ: *Πόντος· παχεῖς γέροντες, ἰχθῦς ἄφθονοι, ἀηδία τις πραγμάτων. Βυζάντιον· ἀψίνθιον, πικρὰ πάντ'. Ἄπολλον. Ταῦτα δὲ καθαρὰ πενήτων ἀγαθά.*
ΔΗ: *Ἀθῆναι φίλταται, πῶς ἂν γένοιθ' ὑμῖν ὅσων ἔστ' ἄξιαι, ἵν' ὦμεν ἡμεῖς πάντα μακαριώτατοι οἱ τὴν πόλιν φιλοῦντες.— εἴσω παράγετε ὑμεῖς. ἀπόπληχθ', ἕστηκας ἐμβλέπων ἐμοί;*
ΝΙ: *ἐκεῖν' ἐθαύμαζον μάλιστα, Δημέα, τῶν περὶ ἐκεῖνον τὸν τόπον· τὸν ἥλιον οὐκ ἦν ἰδεῖν ἐνίοτε παμπόλλου χρόνου· ἀὴρ παχύς τις, ὡς ἔοικ', ἐπεσκότει.*
ΔΗ: *οὔκ, ἀλλὰ σεμνὸν οὐδὲν ἐθεᾶτ' αὐτόθι, ὥστ' αὐτὰ τἀναγκαῖ' ἐπέλαμπε τοῖς ἐκεῖ.*
ΝΙ: *νὴ τὸν Διόνυσον, εὖ λέγεις.*

DEMEAS: Don't you notice the change of scene now? Conditions here are different than at that awful place.
NIKERATOS: Ah, the Black Sea, fat old men, fish beyond measure, a life to make you sick: Byzantium, everything infected with wormwood. Apollo! But here are pure blessings for the poor.
DEM: Dearest Athens. Would that you gain all that you deserve, so that we who love the city might become prosperous and happy. [To slaves] Inside with you! Why do you stand staring at me as if paralyzed? [*The slaves take the luggage inside.*]
NIK: What I found amazing at that place, Demeas, was that occasionally you couldn't see the sun for long stretches. It appeared as if thick fog was hiding it.
DEM: Well there was nothing impressive to see there, so the locals only receive the requisite amount of light.
NIK: How right you are, by Dionysus![15]

This scene from Menander's *The Girl from Samos* (*Samia*), written at the close of the fourth century BC, takes place after the two characters have returned from a trip in the Black Sea to Athens, laden with luggage and attended by servants. It is not clear where in the Black Sea their trip took them, if they stopped off at Byzantium on the way there

[15] Menander, *Samia* 96–112 (adapted from Miller, Penguin).

or back, or if their journey was to Byzantium itself—Pontus, in this scene, denotes not only the Black Sea, but also the areas around it, especially its southern shore.[16] The scene provides a vivid illustration of the double-edged nature of life at the Bosporus and around the Black Sea. On one hand, the combination of currents and winds in the narrow, winding strait meant that fish shoaled *en masse* on their annual migrations to and from the Black Sea—'fish beyond measure' (ἰχθῦς ἄφθονοι). The hydrography of the Bosporus and the meandering course of its underwater currents as they rebounded at elbows in Asia and Europe also dictated the ebb and flow of shipping passing through the strait, allowing the Byzantines and other communities along the strait to impose tolls on passing ships.

On the other hand, the Bosporus could be an unpleasant place, and was particularly dangerous at certain times of the year. Even the fish for which Byzantium was famous were so abundant as to become a curse, and are cited by Demeas in his catalogue of Byzantium's 'ills' (κακά).[17] The Bosporus winds its way down from the Black Sea, its shores ranged by villages and harbours, but its beauty conceals hidden dangers. In the maritime loan quoted in *Against Lacritus*, provision is made for merchants who wished to undertake greater risk by sailing through the Bosporus from the Black Sea after the rising of Arcturus in September, the autumnal equinox. The typical interest rate is 22.5 per cent for a journey from Athens to the Chalcidice or as far as Olbia in the Pontus; but if the merchant sails out of the Pontus past Hieron—the symbolic northern entrance of the Bosporus—during winter, the interest accrued on the loan is increased to 30 per cent, representing the increased danger of sailing through the strait at this time.[18] The traditional seasonal divide between the summer sailing season and the dangerous autumn and winter months, demarcated by the rising of Arcturus, was accentuated at the Bosporus because of its dangerous climatic conditions. Waiting for favourable winds or a change in the currents, ships massed at Hieron in the north, or at the Golden Horn in the south,

[16] Gomme and Sandbach (1973) 555; for the synonymy of Pontus and Byzantium, cf. Braund (1995).

[17] Gomme and Sandbach (1973) 555: 'Why are "plentiful fish" one of the curses of the Pontus? Presumably because one can tire even of a good thing'; cf. Blume (1974) 42 n. 79, quoting O. Hiltbrunner: 'That great quanitities of fish also stink, was certainly not unknown' (transl. mine).

[18] Dem. 35.10.

meaning that *fleets* came through in convoy rather than individual ships: the grain ships (*πλοῖα σιταγωγά*) passing through the Hellespont which Xerxes left unmolested, or the fleets of ships (*πλοῖα πολλά*) which Agis observed sailing into Peiraieus before he sent Clearchus to block the Bosporus during the Decelean War.[19] The necessity for fleets to bulk at both ends of the Bosporus, as they waited for favourable conditions, made them vulnerable to attack from pirates or unscrupulous adventurers, 'armed tax claimers', as they are called by Vincent Gabrielsen, who were attracted to narrow chokepoints like the Bosporus.[20] Allowance is made in this same maritime loan for money paid to 'enemies' to be deducted from the interest paid—recognition of regular and perhaps unavoidable predatory exactions.[21]

Nikeratos' allusion to the thick fog at the Black Sea is evocative of the risks attached to travel in the Bosporus. At the Black Sea, and particularly its southern shore around the mouth of the Bosporus, thick, white fog can appear rapidly, even during calm weather, which blocks out sunlight. Such a phenomenon is evoked in a letter of St. Gregory of Nazianzus, referring to the other, Cimmerian Bosporus in the northern Black Sea: 'Oh Pontic Cimmerians, who live without sun, and who are condemned not only to six months of darkness, as some say, but who also possess not even a part of your life without shadow—their entire existence is, truly, one long night in the shadow of death.'[22] When the effects of this fog are compounded in poor conditions by dense clouds hanging over the hills at the shores of the Black Sea, the coastline becomes completely obscured. The *Black Sea Pilot* repeatedly cautions mariners of the danger of running aground when the coastline is not visible, particularly at areas which resemble the mouth of the Bosporus, where sailors might unwittingly mistake the shore for the exit of the Black Sea. Today, lighthouses on either side of the mouth of the Bosporus deter sailors from the coast and

[19] Hdt. 7.147; Xen. *Hell.* 1.1.35. On these climatic features and their effect on shipping in the strait, see Gabrielsen (2007) 299–302; cf. Neumann (1991) on similar phenomena at the Dardanelles.

[20] Gabrielsen (2007) 300, and see 300–1 for useful comments on piracy concentrated at chokepoints like the Bosporus.

[21] Dem. 35.11.

[22] Greg. Naz. *Ep.* 4.4: *ὦ ποντικοὶ Κιμμέριοι καὶ ἀνήλιοι καὶ οὐ τὴν ἑξάμηνον νύκτα μόνον κατακριθέντες, ὃ δή τινες λέγονται, ἀλλ' οὐδὲ ἕν μέρος τῆς ζωῆς ἄσκιον ἔχοντες, μίαν δὲ νύκτα μακρὰν τὸν ἅπαντα βίον καὶ ὄντως σκιὰν θανάτου* (ed. Gallay, Budé). See Gomme and Sandbach (1973) 555, where this passage is cited and discussed.

mark the mouth of the Bosporus, while fog sirens are used to warn ships of incoming fog.[23] Menander's depiction of a fog-covered Byzantium is a reflection of actual circumstances. As the Argonauts, in Apollonius' poem, arrive at Cyzicus, directly south of Byzantium and the mouth of the Bosporus, they climb a peak and overlook the Thracian coastline: 'And there appeared the misty mouth of the Bosporus and the hills of Mysia.'[24]

In contrast to these natural dangers, Polybius, embarking on his famous digression on Byzantium's situation, claims that with regard to the sea Byzantium possessed the safest and most beneficial position of any city in the known world: so completely did the Byzantines control the narrow mouth of the Pontus, that no trader could sail in or out without their assent. Consequently, Byzantium controlled the trade of slaves, skins, grain, cattle, and salted fish between Greece and the Pontus; and it was the Byzantines' control of this trade which kept it out of the hands of the native barbarians (Thracians and Bithynians) who occupied the area around the strait and would otherwise have made Greco-Pontic trade difficult or impossible:

> The site of Byzantium is as regards the sea more favourable toward security and prosperity than that of any other city in the world known to us, but as regards the land it is the most disadvantageous in both respects. For, concerning the sea, it completely blocks the mouth of the Pontus in such a manner that no one can sail in or out without the consent of the Byzantines. So that they have complete control over the supply of all those many products furnished by the Pontus which men in general require for their daily life.[25]

It was for this reason, according to Polybius, that the Byzantines might rightly be called 'common benefactors of all', and that they

[23] *BSP* 130–1. Note the sanctuary to Heros Stomianos located in the northern part of Byzantium's territory, discussed below in Chapter 5, pp. 198–200, which fulfilled a dual function as a lighthouse.

[24] Ap. Rhod. 1.1114: *φαίνετο δ' ἠερόεν στόμα Βοσπόρου ἠδὲ κολῶναι Μυσίαι* (transl. Race, Loeb, lightly adapted). It is the scholion to this passage which adds that the mouth of the Bosporus was obscured by thick fog: *ὁμιχλῶδες* 'mist-like'. Gilles likened writing his book on the Bosporus to 'cutting through the thick fog which obscures it': *De Bosporo Thracio*, Preface 1, 6 (Grélois, 59, 65).

[25] Pol. 4.38.1–4 (transl. Paton, Loeb). Polybius' interest in Byzantium and the Bosporus may be based on personal autopsy, as assumed by Danov (1942)—61–4 is a German summary of the Bulgarian text; but cf. Thommen (1885) 218; Walbank (1951) 470; Walbank *HCP* I, 487. It seems unlikely that Polybius did visit Byzantium, for as Walbank notes 'he carefully does not claim to have done so'.

could expect support or assistance from the Greeks when threatened by barbarians. The term *euergetes*, used alone, had previously been reserved as an honorary description for generous wealthy individuals and Hellenistic monarchs, especially the Attalids; but the addition of *koinos*, which raised the appellation from the level of a reciprocal relationship between a king and an individual Greek *polis* to an epithet of universal significance, was unprecedented, and would soon be used to describe the Romans.[26] Here, Polybius' use of the term signifies the Byzantines' service in keeping the strait free for sailors; as worldly benefactors, they constituted a buffer against the predations of the local barbarians.

Underlying Polybius' account of Byzantium's situation is the assumption that Byzantium was somehow best suited to controlling Black Sea trade. What gave the city this ability? Polybius' explanation is as follows. The Bosporus currents, which flow south from the Black Sea toward the Sea of Marmara, their violence strengthened by north-easterly winds which dominate for most of the year,[27] rebound from each coast a number of times on their way through to the Propontis, until they reach the cape at Chrysopolis (the place called 'the Calf': 'Bous', in the Byzantine period 'Damalis'), just above Chalcedon. From here they rebound against the promontory at Byzantium, breaking into two branches: one branch flows on into Byzantium's harbour, the Golden Horn; the other, no longer possessing the force to reach Chalcedon, flows out into the Propontis, passing Chalcedon by. For this reason, says Polybius, Byzantium was the superior site, and it, not Chalcedon, possessed the ability to 'control' the strait.[28]

Like Polybius, Dionysius emphasizes the currents of the Bosporus, noting that the current is cleaved in two upon reaching the Bosporios Akra.[29] However, for Dionysius the effects of the currents were not confined to the city's capacity to control Pontic trade. Throughout the

[26] See on this Gabrielsen (2007) 288, with detailed discussion of this passage. On Greek benefactors, cf. Gauthier (1985) 39–53; for the Romans as benefactors, Erskine (1994). Walbank, *HCP* I, 488 suggests that Polybius' use of the term echoes a local source.

[27] For the dominant winds at Istanbul, which are north-easterly but can occasionally blow from the south, cf. von Hammer I (1822) 34–6; *BSP* 107–8; Labaree (1957)32; Graham (1958) 28; more up-to-date figures may be found in the *Admiralty Sailing Directions: Black Sea and Sea of Azov Pilot*^{3} (2010) 56, with data taken over thirty-three years.

[28] Pol. 4.43.3–44.11. Polybius was not alone in this explanation: cf. Dio Cass. 75.10 and Strab. 7.6.2.

[29] Dion. Byz. 4.

treatise, he notes all the locations along the strait where the currents make navigation difficult, where they force ships into enclosed harbours to wait until a change in the currents or winds, and where ships are forced to skirt close to capes in order to avoid their violence.[30] The phenomenon described by Polybius was not limited to Byzantium—sailors were forced to put in for sometimes extended periods at various different indentations along the whole length of the strait. In Dionysius, the adjective *βαθύς*, 'deep, profound', is used not to describe the depth of the sea, but the extent to which these indentations cut into the continent to form harbours sheltered from the currents.[31] Furthermore, the seasonal fluctuations of these currents contributed to the alternating pattern of shipping. The currents are at their strongest from June to late August, when the snows on the northern shore of the Black Sea thaw and flow out into the Pontus, coinciding with the Etesian winds, which blow consistently from the north or north-east throughout the summer. Without a favourable southerly wind, the *Black Sea Pilot* notes, a sailing ship cannot sail north through the Bosporus: 'as it is impossible, even with a smart vessel well handled, to proceed out once through the Bosporus into the Black Sea against a foul wind, owing to the strength of the current'.[32]

This claim is usefully illustrated by a late first-century BC dedication set up at Hieron to Zeus Ourios, 'the fair-winded', the chief god of this sanctuary:

Οὖριον ἐκ πρύμνης τις ὁδηγητῆρα καλείτω
Ζῆνα κατὰ προτόνων ἱστίον ἐκπετάσας·
εἴτ' ἐπὶ κυανέας δίνας δρόμος. ἔνθα Ποσειδῶν
καμπύλον εἱλίσσει κῦμα παρὰ ψαμάθοις,
εἴτε κατ' Αἰγαίην πόντου πλάκα νόστον ἐρευνᾶι,
νείσθω τῶιδε βαλὼν ψαιστὰ παρὰ ξοάνωι.
ὧδε τὸν εὐάντητον ἀεὶ θεὸν Ἀντιπάτρου παῖς
στῆσε Φίλων, ἀγαθῆς σύμβολον εὐπλοίης.

Let he who has spread out his sail by the halyards call upon Zeus Ourios from his stern. Whether his course lies through the dark-blue Cyaneae, where Poseidon rallies the curving wave against the shoals, or if he seeks

[30] Dion. Byz. 4–6, 20 (Mellapokopsas), 50 (Parabolos), 53 (the 'Devil's Current'), 54 (Hestiai), 57 (Pyrrhias Kyon), 77 (Timaea), 102 (Lembos/Blaben), 110 (Bous/Damalis).
[31] So Belfiore (2009) 298.
[32] *BSP* 105.

> a homeward voyage to the Aegean plain of open sea, may he come and place cake-offerings before this statue. Here Philo, son of Antipater, set up the ever-gracious god, a symbol of fair and prosperous sailing.[33]

Hieron, at the northern entrance of the Bosporus (where Darius overlooked the Pontus), was an international religious sanctuary, possessing a kind of *sacrosanctitas* which prevented pirates (state sponsored or not) from seizing ships massed at the sanctuary.[34] Dionysius describes how the possession of Hieron was contested between Byzantium and Chalcedon, and that although the Byzantines succeeded most of the time in controlling the site by their naval strength, and later by purchasing it from Callimedes, an official of Seleucus II or III, it was nevertheless 'a common haven for all who sail'.[35] The site, Moreno notes, fits François de Polignac's definition of a sanctuary of 'mutual recognition', where the protection of the gods guaranteed the sanctity of those who had dealings in the sanctuary.[36] This was particularly appropriate for a sanctuary where ships waited for the dangerous conditions in the strait to abate before attempting a voyage north or south. Cicero, in the course of his tirade against Verres for despoiling a statue of Jupiter Imperator, the Greek Zeus Ourios, the 'fair-winded' (the chief god worshipped at Hieron), notes that the statue of Jupiter Imperator at the mouth of the Pontus 'has been kept there safely to this day, free from damage of profanation, despite all the waves of war that have rolled through the strait, out of that sea or into it again'.[37] The sacrosanct nature of this site derived from the respect afforded a location which served as a safe refuge for ships traversing the dangerous strait. A favourable southerly wind, which would allow a sailor to pass through 'the dark-blue whirlpools' of the Symplegades into the Black Sea, or a northerly wind which would speed him on a voyage home to the Aegean, was thus within the gift of this Zeus Ourios, the patron god of Hieron. Sailors, unable to continue their journey until they received favourable conditions, would propitiate the god, asking for a change in the winds which would allow them to continue their journey north or south. As a

[33] *IKalch* 14. Transl. Moreno (2008) I.6, adapted.

[34] Cf. Moreno (2008) 667: 'the possession of everyone and no one'.

[35] Dion. Byz. 92. The passage survives only in Gilles' Latin paraphrase: *sed commune receptaculum omnium navigantium.*

[36] Moreno (2008) 667.

[37] Cic. *Verr.* 4.130 (transl. Greenwood, Cambridge Mass.).

consequence of being forced to wait for favourable winds and currents, ships massed at sites such as Hieron, and it was because large fleets of ships passed through in this way, regularly, that predators of various kinds were attracted to the strait.

The most famous of these predators is Philip II. In 340, Philip was at the Bosporus. Having failed to conquer Perinthus, he subdued Selymbria then moved to a siege of Byzantium, attempting to secure his rear in Thrace before launching an expedition into Persia, and taking the opportunity to weaken Athens by threatening the grain route from the Black Sea. Here he committed his 'most lawless act': the seizure of a fleet of corn ships bound for Athens and massed at Hieron. Chares was in the area in command of an Athenian fleet, not only to provide support to Byzantium but to escort the corn ships which were gathering there, although at the moment of Philip's attack he had left to take counsel with the Persians.[38] It may be that Chares had been sent north to anticipate Philip, but it is equally plausible that these escorts were simply normal practice, and that Chares' mission had a more general objective: the protection of convoys passing through the strait from predators.[39] Such escorts were a common occurrence, fulfilling a requirement created by the large fleets of ships passing through the dangerous strait. In the fourth century, as Gabrielsen shows, non-Athenian ships would pay a fee to be escorted with the Athenian fleet along the Hieron–Aegean route. Individual Athenian generals received payments from other *poleis* in return for this service, which included immunity from seizure (μὴ συλᾶσθαι), and which was called a form of *eunoia*.[40] During the fourth century, when Byzantium and Chalcedon themselves began to seize grain ships, the general Timomachus was, like Chares, sent to Hieron to escort the grain fleet through the strait, and was approached by ambassadors from Maroneia who asked him (δεομένων), though

[38] Hammond and Griffith (1979) 575; cf. Moreno (2008) 668, rightly noting that Chares could not have expected Philip to launch an attack at Hieron, an international religious sanctuary.

[39] Archibald (2013) 241 notes the likelihood that convoys of ships *regularly* needed to be convoyed through the strait to protect them from predators.

[40] Dem. 8.24–5, discussed by Gabrielsen (2007) 305–7, who also adduces Xen. *Hell.* 1.7.2, 'money from the Hellespont belonging to the Athenian people' which the general Erasinides was accused of withholding, and Lys. 19.50, on the general Diotimos, also accused of withholding other such payments.

they must also have offered payment, to escort their own ships with the convoy.[41]

Piratical seizures of shipping are well-attested in the region. As soon as Persian control of the Bosporus broke down after the Ionian Revolt, Histiaeus of Miletus went to Byzantium and turned to piracy.[42] In a later incident Xerxes, this time at the Hellespont, is said by Herodotus to have allowed grain ships (coming from the Black Sea) on their way through to the Peloponnese and Aegina to pass.[43] According to, Herodotus, Xerxes allows the ships through because, he boasts, they were going to the same place as the Persians, and could carry his own cargo for him. Herodotus' assumption is that under normal circumstances Xerxes would have seized the ships. Certainly this kind of *leisteia*, sometimes state-sanctioned, occurred frequently at the Bosporus. The practice was a regular, even seasonal occurrence because of the fluctuations in the prevailing winds and currents of the strait.

Overall, Polybius' description of the currents is accurate. The dominant current runs north to south, despite the existence of counter-currents along the sides of the Bosporus. These are created because the main current seeks the shortest route from point to point, leaving space for the backwash, and boats can take advantage of them when sailing north through the strait—particularly when reinforced by exceptional south-westerlies. There also exists the 'kanal', a deep undercurrent flowing against and underneath the main surface current, which can be used to aid boats passing north.[44] In an important passage, Dionysius describes how, at a place revealingly named Anaplous (beside Hestiai), ships could take advantage of these various features in order to overcome, with difficulty, the dominant current: 'I saw many laden boats, running with a fair wind behind their sails, which were turned backward as the force of the current contended

[41] [Dem.] 50. 17, 20, 58–9. [42] Hdt. 6.5, 26.

[43] Hdt. 7.147. This is the earliest evidence for grain shipments from the Black Sea. Note that Herodotus does not claim they were bound for Athens. Cf. Moreno (2007a) 161.

[44] Graham (1958) 29–33. The argument of Carpenter (1948), that boats could not sail through the Bosporus against the currents before the invention of more advanced forms of shipping in the seventh century (the pentekonter), overlooks (*inter alia*) these two features, and has been thoroughly demolished: cf. Newskaja (1955) 16–17, 27, Labaree (1957), Graham (1958) 29–33, and Isaac (1986) 219 n. 37. Nevertheless, even if possible, the difficulty in sailing north, especially at an early period, should not be underestimated: cf. West (2003) 153.

with the wind'.[45] Dionysius goes on to say that, if the winds failed to push them past the current, sailors could disembark and drag their vessel from land through the most difficult sections.

One issue which Polybius' explanation does not consider, but which is clear from his and Dionysius' treatment of the currents, is that Byzantium was not the only place at which one might abuse the course of the currents to establish a toll station. Nor was Chalcedon the only other spot which a competitor might use to levy a toll. In fact, there are seven different elbows. The first is at Dicaea Petra, near mod. Kireç Burnu, the second at Glarium (mod. Paşa Bahç) on the Asiatic side, before the current reaches Hermaeum (mod. Rumeli Hisarı).[46] The characteristic feature of the strait is that it is angular, and consequently the currents create 'elbows' each time they hit the shore and rebound to the other side.[47] Any of these elbows might be an appropriate location for a customs house or toll station, because the currents force ships to skirt the capes at each spot in order to escape the violence of the water. Revealingly, the penultimate elbow before Byzantium was Chrysopolis, the site of Athens' fifth-century toll station. Moreover, each of these seven elbows accentuated the dangers of passing through the Bosporus: where the promontories repulse the currents, the backwash creates counter-currents, which form whirlpools and vortices at the most dangerous spots.

An infamous location is by the fortress at Rumeli Hisarı (Hermaeum), the narrowest point of the Bosporus, where Darius was said to have crossed the strait on his Scythian expedition. Here, the narrow breadth of the strait causes the current to rebound rapidly from the rocks on the European shore, reaching a speed of up to four knots: it is called the 'Devil's Current', *şeytan akıntısı*, by the Turks, maintaining a tradition going back to Dionysius.[48] The alternative name for the place, Pyrrhias Kyon, 'the Red Hound', is explained by

[45] Dion. Byz. 53: *καὶ πολλὰς εἶδον ναῦς μεστάς, οὐριοδρομούσας τοῖς ἱστίοις, ὑποφερομένας εἰς τοὐπίσω μαχομένου τῷ πνεύματι τοῦ ῥοῦ*. The passage is adduced and discussed by Graham (1958) 29–33.

[46] The elbows following Hermaeum are mod. Kandili Point (called *antiperan tes Asias* by Polybius), Hestiai/Anaplous, Damalis/Bous at Chrysopolis on the Asiatic side, and the Bosporios Akra at Byzantium.

[47] *σκολιός*: Ap. Rhod. 2.549. On these features of the currents, cf. Gilles, *De Bosporo Thracio*, 4.32–43 (Grélois, 86–92); *RE* Suppl. IX s.v. Pontos Euxeinos, cols 932–8; Ullyott and Ilgaz (1946); Carpenter (1948); Walbank, *HCP* I, 495–7; Walbank (1951); Labaree (1957); Graham (1958) 27–30; Dumont (1976–7) 97–100.

[48] Dion. Byz. 53 (*τοῦ ῥεύματος τὴν βίαν ὁμοίαν δράκοντος*).

von Hammer (paraphrasing Dionysius) by the sound created by the currents as they clash against the rocks, resembling the barking of hounds:

> The promontory, on which the fortress of Rumeli is built, was called in antiquity Hermaeum, that is a sanctuary of Hermes, and was known generally as the narrowest part of the Bosporus, where the rocks standing opposite one another are concentrated upon the narrow breadth of five stades, and where, by the rebounding of the current, a roaring surge-tide (*Fluthenschwall*), is brought forth. Because of this the coast was named either Phonoides, that is 'the accoustic' (*das Schallende*), or in an even earlier time Pyrrhias Kyon, that is 'the Red Hound', because the tide which passes by here barks just like an evil hound.[49]

At spots such as this, where vessels are forced to hug the shore to avoid the dominant current, it is easy for a sailing ship to become caught in the backwash or a vortex and be thrust aground onto the coast. The following anecdote, recounted by Grosvenor, took place at mod. Kandili Point, just opposite Pyrrhias Kyon, illustrating the regularity of shipwrecks caused by precisely this 'Devil's Current':

> So sharply do its [the Bosporus'] submarine banks descend, that large vessels, hugging the land too closely, though in deep water, often run their bowsprits and yards into houses on the shore. Many a shipmaster has paid damages for such unceremonious intrusion, not only of his rigging, but of his sailors, into drawing-rooms and champers along the Bosphorus. I remember, when making a good-by call upon an English lady at Candili, her matter-of-fact apology for the torn casements of the windows and the disordered appearance of the room. She said that a Greek vessel ran into the house that morning, and that the carpenters had not had time to make repairs.[50]

Control of the strait, the key to the Black Sea, therefore lay not only in Byzantium itself, but consisted in controlling each of these dangerous elbows. To do so required naval dominance in the seas in and around the Bosporus. In the fifth century, possession of this space repeatedly

[49] von Hammer II (1822) 225 (transl. mine); cf. *RE* III s.v. Bosporos col 747 (transl. mine): 'a far extending promontory, which forms a natural harbour to the west, while on its other side it catches the current from the north and so creates violent whirlpools' (ein weit vortretendes Vorgebirge, das nach Westen einen natürlichen Hafen bildet, während es auf der andern Seite die von Norden herkommende Strömung auffängt und so heftige Wirbel erzeugt)'.

[50] Grosvenor (1895) 122.

changed hands between Athens and Sparta, and both simultaneously attempted to exploit the fleets passing through. To extract a toll successfully required monopolistic control of both shores of the Bosporus and its approaches, in order to prevent competitors attempting to levy any kind of toll at the same time. In the fourth century, when no one power controlled both shores of the strait, the Byzantines and Chalcedonians themselves levied tolls on shipping simultaneously, each, presumably, exploiting these locations on either shore of the strait.[51] Only by dominating the whole region with each of the Bosporus elbows was it possible for any single power to control the strait and shipping, as the Athenians would do in the fifth century, and as the third-century Byzantines would accomplish.

1.2 BOSPORAN IDENTITIES

In Demosthenes' *De Corona*, an apocryphal Byzantine decree records the honours granted by the Byzantines to Athens for her help during the siege of Philip II in 340. It is dated according to the year in office of the *hieromnamon* (eponymous magistrate) Bosporichos, an exceptionally rare personal name. The decree may or may not be based on an official Byzantine source, but it is interesting to note the possibility that the forger, who was concerned with creating an authentic-looking document, chose a name compounded upon Bosporus.[52] The obscure name also occurs on a funerary *stele* of uncertain prominence, but which probably, on iconographic and onomastic grounds, comes from Byzantium or Chalcedon. The *stele* reveals the existence of four men from successive generations of the same family, all of whom shared this name. A relief on the *stele* shows a man sitting on a couch, facing left; underneath and to the left are depicted two smaller male figures, allowing us to unravel the family connections of these Bosporichoi: a father

[51] [Dem.] 50.6, 17; [Arist.] *Oec.* 1346b 30–5.

[52] Dem. 18.90–1. For the authenticity of this document, cf. Treves (1940) 157–8; J. and L. Robert, *BE* 1946–7: 24; Robert (1962) 64, n. 2; Wankel (1976) 497–8; Canevaro (2013) 261–7. It is probable that the document is an interpolation made in the late second century BC.

Bosporichos, son of Bosporichos, and his two sons, both his namesakes.[53]

This and other names beginning in Bosp-, or compounded upon Bosporus, are not unique to Byzantium, but they are particularly widespread there.[54] Bosporichos appears at various cities around the Thracian Bosporus (Chalcedon, Heraclea, Mesembria, and Selymbria), twice at the Cimmerian Bosporus, and twice at Olbia.[55] The epichoric name therefore proliferated around the two straits, Thracian and Cimmerian, representing a sense of identification between the inhabitants of both areas and their respective straits. Names which belong to the same family display similar patterns: Bosporeus is found at Tomis in the Pontus, Bosporios at Perinthus-Heraclea, and Bosporiche at Panticapaeum, all cities within a short distance of one or both of the two straits. Bosporos itself as a personal name is also found at Lysimacheia in Thrace, near Byzantine territory.[56] Such names suggest that the people who lived around the Bosporus found some sense of local identity in their relationship with the strait, which found one means of expression in this peculiar onomastic group.[57]

Bosporus, *βοῦς–πόρος*, means in Greek, 'Cow's Crossing', or Oxford. The term could be applied descriptively to any narrow strait which a cow could ford by swimming, although as we shall see, the etymology of the Thracian Bosporus came to be associated with one particularly famous cow.[58] It remains possible that the word derived from a Thracian root, retroactively connected with Greek legends to match its meaning in Greek.[59] However, two straits, one in Thrace and, later, one in the Crimea, came to be viewed as *the* Bospori, despite the word's original descriptive use. In Polybius' day, as we

[53] *IByz* 376, with Łajtar's comments on p. 255. Several other Byzantines with the name are known: s.v. *LGPN* IV. On the name, see Robu (2010/11) 282–3.

[54] Bospon: Schönert-Geiss II, 1148–53 and *IByz* 154; Bosp-, probably Bosporichos or Bospon: *IByz* 290.

[55] s.v. *LGPN* IV–VB.

[56] *CIL* III 14406f. On this family of names, cf. Bechtel (1917) 523; Fıratlı-Robert, 145; Masson (1994) 139; Łajtar, *IByz*, pp. 86, 173, 255; Robu (2010/11) 282–3; Dana (2011) 95.

[57] For the month Bosporios and the connected festival of the Bosporia, cf. Robu (2010/11) 282, and Chapter 5.2.

[58] Reinach (1923) 64–5; Georgacas (1971) 108.

[59] *RE* III s.v. Bosporos col. 741 and Burr (1932) 27; but cf. Georgacas (1971) 82–109.

have seen, Byzantium was associated by outsiders like Polybius with control of the Bosporus, and in what follows it will be argued that the Byzantines deliberately and successfully publicized their connection with the strait in order to encourage this association. This local connection can be traced in onomastics, historical geography, and myths, especially myths which, like those of the Argonauts and Io, dealt with the strait as a conceptual whole (Io's fording), or as the key to previously unknown areas (the taming of the Symplegades). It becomes clear when these myths are examined that the two cities on either shore contended in a friendly rivalry with one another, each attempting to outdo the other's connection with the strait.

The Bosporus has a brief but important appearance in Apollonius' *Argonautica*. It was here that the Clashing Rocks, the Symplegades, were tamed by the crew of the Argo with Athena's aid. As the Argo sailed through, into the Black Sea en route to Colchis, the rocks ceased clashing, symbolizing that the Argonauts' expedition had opened a whole new area to Greek experience, the Black Sea, mapping order onto a hitherto unknown world.[60] The violence of these rocks is famously evoked in the *Odyssey*:

> To this day no ship has come to this place [the Symplegades] and found an escape: instead, the timbers of ships and the bodies of men are alike hurled forcefully in the sea by the waves and by raging, flaming storms.[61]

The Cyaneae, as these rocks were otherwise known, were viewed, like Hieron, as a symbolic entrance/exit to the Black Sea, and with the pillars of Heracles at Gibraltar they enclosed the Mediterranean. It was, allegedly, prohibited by the Peace of Callias for the Athenian fleet to sail past these rocks.[62] However, in Apollonius' poem neither the Symplegades nor the strait are described in any detail—like Homer, the poet of the *Argonautica* simply describes them as violent and tempestuous. Nevertheless, the Symplegades were identified by the ancients at the northern mouth of the Bosporus as the Cyanean islands in mod. Fanaraki.[63] Only the European island can today be identified: a large rock, 20 m high, which is connected to the

[60] Ap. Rhod. 2.317–40, 549–610, with Thalmann (2011) 166.
[61] Hom. *Od.* 12.66–8; cf. Pind. *Pyth.* 4.203–10.
[62] Eur. *Andr.* 863, Dem. 19.273, and Plut. *Cim.* 13.4–5, with Meiggs (1972) 147.
[63] Dion. Byz. 86; Strab. 7.6.1; Hdt. 4.85.1.

village of Rumeli Feneri by a mole. Until the nineteenth century, the remains of an ancient altar and column, called the Column of Pompey, could be seen here. The Asiatic island is more difficult to identify. Only a small reef on the Asiatic side near the promontory of Ancyreum could be adduced, but it—like the European islet—bears no resemblance to any ancient descriptions of the violent and tempestuous Cyaneae. Andreossy argued that Gilles, followed by others, was wrong to call this reef one of the Cyaneae: 'Almost all the modern authors have been wrong to identify such a reef with that of the Cyaneae of Europe, situated in view on the opposite coast, just above the cape of Fanaraki. There does not exist, at least at present, any rock, obvious or hidden, where it would be possible to presume that here the ship of the Argonauts escaped, or where Minerva, who watched the fearful sailors from heaven, came down to their aid and met the rocks with her powerful hand.'[64]

Despite the vivid descriptions of the dangerous rocks in the *Argonautica* and the *Odyssey*, this area is also the easiest part of the Bosporus to sail through for ships on their way to the Black Sea, since as Dewing notes the currents are not at their strongest until the middle of the strait. Instead, the strait is described as simply 'narrow' and 'winding', and the Cyaneae bear no resemblance to their mythical counterparts. Probably the 'rocks' were originally no more than the two banks of the Bosporus, which seem to close the way ahead and behind of any boat sailing through, and whose currents must have seemed to early Greek sailors and colonists an insurmountable obstacle.[65] It is possible that the two reefs were connected to the Symplegades because their low height meant that they seemed to appear and disappear as they were covered or uncovered by the tides.[66] But this must have come later, in order to retroactively connect the Bosporus' actual

[64] Andreossy (1828) 331 (transl. mine). Cf. Freely (1996) 317–19.

[65] Dewing (1924) 471–4 ('pitifully inauspicious' today, at p. 471). Note also Dethier (1873) 68 (transl. mine): 'The Clashing Rocks, the Cyaneae or the Symplegades (in Turkish Orakièh-Tachi), are more famous in myth than they are important in reality.' Pickard (1987) argues that the effect of the rocks clashing together was created by an optical illusion. Dan (2013) is a study of modern and ancient localizations of the Clashing Rocks. She notes, at 85–6, that the rumours of difficulties in passing through the dangerous strait 'have transformed these undeniable dangers into perilous monsters (ont transfiguré ces dangers indéniables en des monstres périlleux)'.

[66] von Hammer II (1822) 270–2.

topography with a legend which envisaged the Clashing Rocks as the narrow, winding strait itself.

This tendency to retroactively connect sites along the Bosporus with the Argonautic story is at the core of Dionysius' *Anaplous*; indeed, the Argonautic motif which runs through the treatise serves to tie together villages and toponyms which would otherwise lack a shared mythical history.[67] Despite the brief description of the Argo's passage in the *Argonautica*, Dewing has shown that no less than twelve locations along the Bosporus derived their names from Argonautic tradition—as though the Argonauts disembarked twelve times on their passage through.[68] After the Bosporios Akra, Dionysius leads us up to a shrine of Athena Ekbasios (Gilles: *Minerva Egressoria*). The epithet, which means 'of disembarkation', is otherwise completely unattested save for a reference to Apollo Ekbasios in the *Argonautica*, to whom the Argonauts sacrificed when they disembarked in Mysia. The explanation given by Dionysius is that this was the spot where the founders of Byzantium first came ashore, connecting the founders of Byzantium with the heroic age, and drawing a synchronism with the Argonauts.[69] Interestingly, the shrine was located in the same place as the modern Goth column, which stands in Gülhane park on the coast of the Seraglio Point, erected in honour of the emperor Claudius II for his defence of the city against an attack by the Goths (after AD 269).[70] In one version, the column was erected on the spot where there originally stood a statue of Byzas, the legendary founder of the city.[71] If this is correct, then the correlation drawn by Dionysius between the shrine and the arrival of the colonists is genuine, and reveals how the civic and religious geography of the city was mapped onto spots popularly connected with the Argonauts and the arrival of the earliest settlers. Other allusions to the Argonauts are apparent throughout Dionysius' text. An Iasonion was located along the

[67] For the Argonautic associations of the Bosporus, see Dewing (1924) and Vian (1974).

[68] Dewing (1924) 469–72.

[69] Dion. Byz. 8, with Ap. Rhod. 1.996, 1186. Belfiore (2009) 297 notes the existence of an Artemis Ekbateria at Siphnos in the fifth century, though this comes from a late source.

[70] *IByz* 15.

[71] Nicephorus Gregoras, *Rom. Hist.* VIII 5 (Schopen-Bekker I, p. 305), with Belfiore (2009) 297. For other statues of Byzas and his wife Phidaleia, cf. *Anth. Pal.* 16.66–7 = Hesychius, *FGrHist* 390 F 1.34 = *IByz* 8A–B.

western shore, and various places were connected with his return voyage south with Medea. A laurel tree on the Thracian shore was supposedly planted by Medea, and there was a rock named Pyrgus Medea. The place named Pharmacis was also named after Medea—here she allegedly left behind her caskets of poison, but the evil reputation gained for this name caused the later inhabitants to change its name to Therapeia.[72]

More interesting, however, are instances of doublets, in which multiple sites carried the same name derived from the Argo's journey.[73] The most famous of these are the twin *hiera* of the Bosporus. As Vian has shown, there were two places named Hieron roughly opposite one another near the northern mouth of the strait, not one, where Jason was supposed to have sacrificed to the twelve gods. 'True' Hieron was named *Ἱερὸν τὸ Χαλκηδονίων*, the famous sanctuary, located on the Asiatic side and discussed above (pp. 30–32). Another Hieron, *Ἱερὸν τὸ Βυζάντιων*, was located on the European shore. It is called a Sarapeion by Polybius, but Dionysius claims that it was a shrine dedicated by Jason to the twelve gods.[74] Very likely the two cities on either shore, Byzantium and Chalcedon, both sought to associate themselves with the story, and made rival claims to the hallowed site.[75] The tradition must have been ancient: in the third century, the European Byzantines bought 'true' Hieron from an official of Seleucus II or III, so the competing claim had to have been made before this point, likely going back to the Classical period or earlier. This spirit of rivalry, Vian has shown, illustrates that the two communities contended in associating themselves with Argonautic tradition, the formative myth in the Bosporus' history. Other doublets are collected by Vian. Among them, we find two places named Daphne, two Hestiai, and, of course, each continent could claim one of the Symplegades.[76] At stake in this civic rivalry was the memory of the Argonauts, the Greeks who first tamed the

[72] For these locations on the return voyage: Dewing (1924) 472.

[73] On this topic, see Vian (1974) 91–3.

[74] Pol. 4.39.6; Strab. 7.6.1; Dion. Byz. 75, 92–3. See Vian (1974) 91–3. For the correct site of Hieron, and its literary and archaeological testimonia, cf. Moreno (2008).

[75] Robu (2014c) 194–5 connects the rivalry over Hieron with the end of the coinage alliance concluded between Byzantium and Chalcedon in the later part of the third century. That is, the friendly rivalry over the Bosporus' mythological history escalated at this stage into something more serious.

[76] Vian (1974) 91–3. Note, also, that of 112 section divisions in Güngerich's edition of Dionysius, sections 1–86 are devoted to the European side of the straits, while only twenty-six sections are devoted to the Asiatic side. See also Dan (2013) 105.

Symplegades and made the strait free for shipping, opening the Black Sea to Greek traders and colonists. Whichever community could monopolize Argonautic traditions could depict itself as the inheritor of that tradition. The Byzantines were, as we saw earlier, praised as common benefactors precisely because they kept the strait free from interference, maintaining the Argonauts' legacy.

In the same fashion, events which occurred elsewhere in the Argonautic cycle were 'attracted' to the Bosporus and localized there.[77] In the *Argonautica*, Jason was said to have changed the anchor of the Argo at Cyzicus.[78] There was, however, a place named Ancyreum on the furthest headland to the north of the Bosporus on its Asiatic side, the etymology of which is connected to the same story by Dionysius.[79] Similarly, the court of Amycus, the king who challenged the Argonauts to boxing bouts and was slain by Polydeuces, traditionally took place in Bithynia somewhere along the Propontic shore.[80] However, in Dionysius the Argonauts are supposed to have encountered Amycus at his court on the Asiatic shore of the Bosporus, and Polydeuces is claimed to have fought him along the shores of the Bosporus on the way to Colchis.[81] Onomastics add to the overall picture: though the name Iason and other names connected to the crew of the Argonauts are common everywhere, their occurrence at the Bosporus and Propontis may perhaps be connected to the importance of Argonautic traditions here.[82]

The most important allusion to the Argonauts in Dionysius, however, is the claim that they arrived at an altar of Semestre, who was said to be the nurse of Ceroessa—the mother of Byzas, Byzantium's legendary eponym, and the namesake of the Golden Horn, the Ceras.[83] This story connected the Argonauts to the other significant myth in the Bosporus' past: the passage of Io. The story of Io, whose passage across the Bosporus was said to have given the strait its

[77] Dewing (1924) 477–81 adduces and discusses in more detail the following examples.

[78] Ap. Rhod. 1.953–8.

[79] Dion. Byz. 87 (the passage survives only in Gilles' Latin paraphrase).

[80] Ap. Rhod. 2.1–10; Plin. *HN* 5.43.

[81] Dion. Byz. 62, 95, and see Belfiore (2009) 318–19.

[82] Four Iasons are known at Byzantium: s.v. *LGPN* IV, Fıratlı-Robert, 166, Łajtar, *IByz*, p. 165, and Erhan and Eskalen (2011) 177. The name Euphemus, Łajtar notes, the helmsman of the Argo, is also known at Chalcedon: *IKalch* 6.4; 122.

[83] Dion. Byz. 24.

name, would attain an extra-local significance, as a newly published inscription from Tomis demonstrates. It is the funerary epigram of a Byzantine actor resident at Tomis in the second century AD, who alludes to the city of his birth in the form of a riddle, answered in the final line of the epigram. Having abandoned his home city, which is called 'the famed city of the Inachian land' (*Εἰναχίας γαίης προλιπὼν περιώνυμον ἄστυ*), Euelpistus came to live in 'the city of Tomus', who was the legendary eponym of the city of Tomis on the western shore of the Pontus. In the final line, the riddle is answered: 'Henceforth it is necessary for you to know, excellent passer-by, what my name is, and which city gave me birth: all called me Euelpistus son of Sosus, the Byzantine.'[84]

The phrase 'Inachian Land' refers to a legend preserved most fully by Hesychius of Miletus (sixth century AD), whose *Patria* encompasses the legendary history of Constantinople's predecessor as far as this was known to the later Byzantines. The story of Io, daughter of the Argive king Inachus, is the last of three aetiologies given for the foundation of Byzantium.[85] In Hesychius' first account, Byzantium's foundation is attributed to Argives, following an oracle pronounced at Delphi which referred to the Golden Horn and the two rivers which flow into its northern end: the Cydarus and Barbyses.[86] His second account claims that the city was founded by Megarians led by Byzas, but that there was another tradition in which Byzas was the son of a local nymph, Semestre.[87] In the version which Hesychius calls the most plausible, Zeus fell in love with Io, daughter of the Argive king Inachus, and had Hermes kill her guardian Argus and raped her. Io was transformed in the process into a cow. Hera, jealous of Io, sent a gadfly to torment Io, driving her from place to place. Ultimately she arrived in Thrace, where she crossed the strait and left behind the name Bosporus.[88] This is the story which appears to be referenced on the inscription from Tomis. After crossing the strait, Io returned to

[84] *λοιπὸν ἀνανκαῖόν σε μαθεῖν, παροδεῖτα κράτιστε, οὔνομά μοι τί πότ' ἐστι, πόλις δέ με γείνατο ποία· Εὐέλπιστον Σώσου με Βυζάντιον εἶπον ἅπαντες.* Avram and Jones (2011), revised by Staab (2011).

[85] *FGrHist* 390 F 1.3–9; on Io, cf. Engelmann (1903) and Yalouris (1986); on Hesychius, cf. Kaldellis (2005). This discussion of Hesychius' aetiologies follows closely my discussion in Russell (2012) 134–5.

[86] §3. This oracle is also found, with slightly different wording, in Dion. Byz. 23 and Steph. Byz. s.v. *Βυζάντιον*.

[87] §5. [88] §§6–9.

the Golden Horn and gave birth to Ceroessa near an altar of Semestre (a local water nymph). Ceroessa was thought to have given her own name to the Golden Horn, the Ceras, and in turn to have given birth to Byzas by Poseidon.[89]

Io's story therefore attained a wide popularity if it was recognizable in Scythia and the Black Sea in the second century AD. It also served a triple function as the aetiology for the foundation of Byzantium, the name of the Ceras, and of the Bosporus itself. By publicizing the mythology the Byzantines could connect themselves and their home with the legendary history of the Bosporus, and simultaneously deny the connection with Io (and the Argonauts) to the Chalcedonians on the opposite bank. Indeed coins from the same period represent Byzas and his mother, Ceroessa, depicted as a woman with horns inherited from her mother Io.[90] The myth was also intimately connected with the geography of the area. I quote J. von Hammer's explanation:

> The promontory of Semestre, laying in toward the shore, is the nurse of Ceroessa (the horned maiden); that is, the nourisher of the two concurrently flowing rivers the Cydarus and Barbyses, which flow out into the harbour formed in the shape of a horn. We have therefore here a double horn—the second the confluence of the two rivers (Ceroessa), and the first the golden cornucopia of the harbour (Chrysoceras). Ceroessa was married to Poseidon, that is, the sweet waters [of the Barbyses and Cydarus] mixed with the waves of the sea (in the harbour), and the fruit of this was Byzas, the founder of Byzantium, which lies upon the harbour.[91]

Very likely, therefore, this whole story had as its origin an allegory for the geography of the Golden Horn, fed by the sweet waters of the Thracian rivers flowing into the sea to create the gulf of the Ceras. The mixture of the sweet waters with the water of the sea was thought to have given birth to the city itself, just as the union of the water nymph Semestre with the god of the sea led to the birth of Byzas. This is also the spot where, claims Dionysius, the colonists originally intended to found a city. As they were performing the necessary rites, a raven snatched one of the sacred torches and carried it to

[89] Similar stories are found in Dion. Byz. 24, Steph. Byz. s.v. *Βυζάντιον*, and Procop. *Aed.* 1.5.1.

[90] Schönert-Geiss II, 2012–22, 2032–74.

[91] von Hammer I (1822) 19 (transl. mine); cf. also Andreossy (1828) 277.

the Bosporios Akra. Following the sign, the colonists chose to found the city there.[92]

Presumably this location, where Ceroessa bore Byzas, the altar of Semestre, at the confluence of the rivers Barbyses and Cydarus, was held by the Byzantines as sacred. There have been very few archaeological discoveries from ancient Byzantium, but during the construction of an electrical power station at Sılahtarağa at the north-western end of the Golden Horn in 1949, there were discovered several sculptures from the imperial period. A full excavation found that the location had housed a *gigantomachia*, a scene of the battle between the gods and the titans: the sculptures were carved in white and black marble, the gods in white, the titans in black, all part of a single composition. The find is outlined in the exhibition *From Byzantium to Istanbul*, where it is noted that remains of water pipes were also discovered, suggesting that it may have been a nymphaeum, a building with a fountain, appropriate to a location held sacred to a water nymph. It is, perhaps, no coincidence that one of the largest archaeological finds from ancient Byzantium should have been made here. Whatever sacredness the site possessed derived from this same local tradition: this was the site of Byzas' birth, and the original (legendary) settlement on the Horn.[93] The association of the area with the water nymph, Semestre, becomes more likely when we recall that Istanbul lacks a ready water supply: the only naturally occurring fresh water in the area comes from these two rivers, the Sweet Waters of Europe, and Hadrian, Constantine II, and Valens were all forced to provide the city with water by building aqueducts, cisterns, and a sewage system to ensure a supply of water from Bulgaria and Belgrade forest. Indeed, Themistius, writing in AD 373 in praise of Valens, likens the water flowing into the city with the population welcoming the 'Thracian nymphs'.[94] For colonists, founding a city in an area with no readily available fresh water supply, the two rivers could easily have taken on religious significance in their association with the water nymph Semestre.

There is evidence, further, that in the Roman period the local elites of the Bosporus claimed legitimacy by connecting themselves with

[92] Dion. Byz. 24.

[93] For the exhibition and these observations: S. Karagöz in *From Byzantium to Istanbul*, 60–5; cf. *De Byzance à Stamboul*, 31–4.

[94] Them. *Or.* 11.151c–152a.

these stories. Philostratus refers to a sophist from Byzantium, Marcus, who traced his descent back to Byzas as a mark of honour.[95] The man was a contemporary of Hadrian, and was possibly the same Memmius Marcus who appears as eponymous magistrate and, later, as a deceased hero on the coins of Byzantium in the second century AD.[96] Only the name connects the two men. Another Byzantine sophist mentioned by Philostratus is, however, almost certainly identifiable with a local statesman and Roman senator. C. Sallius Aristaenetus appears on coins from the period following AD 198 as eponymous magistrate and local priest of the imperial cult.[97] Another Byzantine named Aristaenetus is said by Philostratus to have been a pupil of the famous Chrestos of Byzantium.[98] Łajtar, following Dessau, notes that both men should probably be identified with the C. Sallius Aristaenetus of two Severan career inscriptions discovered in Rome.[99] This last Roman senator passed through a fairly standard *cursus* until the final title mentioned on his inscriptions, the extraordinary designation *orator maximus*. Aristaenetus' last title supports the connection with the sophist of Philostratus: a famous orator and sophist, who rose to the Roman senate from provincial roots. If these identifications are correct, it reveals that the social circles to which Marcus of Byzantium belonged were the upper echelons of elite society. By tracing his lineage back to Byzas and the foundation of the city, Marcus was attempting to legitimate his own family's privileged status. The same pretension is found in the Peloponnese, where Spartan families traced their lineage back to the Dioscuri or Heracles.[100] Another Byzantine named Aglaias was said to

[95] Philostr. *VS* 1.24.

[96] Schönert-Geiss II, 1384, 1395–8 (AD 147–161): *ἐπὶ Μαμμί(ου) Μάρκου* or *ἐπὶ Μαμμί(ου) Μάρκου ἱερομ(νάμονος)*; 1424–6, 1433–40, 2046–80 (AD 166–9): *ἐπὶ Μεμμί(ου) Μάρκου ἥρως τὸ β′*. Discussing these coins, Łajtar (*IByz* p. 215) notes that a son or freedman of this man may be attested on *IByz* 308, and that Memmii in Byzantium probably go back to P. Memmius Regulus, governor of Achaea AD 34–44, and of Asia in AD 47. On Marcus, cf. Rothe (1988) 24, and Dana (2013) 34, noting that some of the coins contain the portrait of Byzas, suggesting that the Marcus on the coins must be identifiable with the famous sophist.

[97] Schönert-Geiss II, 1462–3, 1510, 1521–4, 1600–5.

[98] Philostr. *VS* 2.11.

[99] *CIL* 6. 1511–12, with Łajtar, *IByz* p. 215 and Dessau (1890); cf. *RE* I A s.v. C. Sallius Aristaenetus (2) cols 1908–10, and Dana (2013) 34 on Chrestos.

[100] Fıratlı-Robert, 137 cite various examples. On the phenomenon of the aristocratic elite in the imperial period tracing their origins to mythical figures, cf. Quaß (1993) 68–70.

have done likewise and traced his lineage to Heracles.[101] Possibly, as Robert suggested, this was a form of *eugeneia* between the noble families at Byzantium, some tracing themselves back to Byzas, some to Heracles.[102]

Our evidence for the importance of these traditions, however, derives from a late period, when, we are led to believe, the traditions and legends of Greek cities were revived in response to Roman domination or encouragement.[103] Hadrian, it is likely, personally visited the city on his tour through Greece—a visit which may have had a profound impact on the community's civic life. His first term as eponymous magistrate is mentioned on an inscription as τὸ α΄.[104] Usually, Łajtar notes, the first time a numeral is cited in a chain of consecutive terms of office is the second. The engraver must have known, when Hadrian accepted his first term, that he would hold it two or more times, and it is likely that he agreed to hold it for a number of consecutive terms.[105] Hadrian returned from Syria to Rome in the winter of 117/18, stopping in Bithynia, and it is likely that he stayed in either Nicomedia or Byzantium. Choosing Byzantium would have allowed him to accept the office in person.[106] A natural response to the panhellenist emperor's visit was the revival of local traditions, and it may even have encouraged Memmius Marcus to associate himself with his city's legendary founder—a useful way to ingratiate himself and his family with the visiting emperor. Furthermore, the text of Dionysius, which describes a region pregnant with these kinds of mythological associations, might itself be a product of a period when such local traditions were revived. Indeed, the emperor may have directly encouraged a revival of these traditions. Cyril Mango argued that the aqueduct of Valens, which follows the crest of the isthmus which connected Byzantium to Thrace, running between the third and fourth hills of Constantinople, was in fact built by Hadrian and rebuilt later in the sixth century.[107] If this is correct, we could easily imagine the Byzantines welcoming the arrival of Semestre to the city, in celebration of this new water supply, and crediting Hadrian with the achievement; just as Themistius later praised Valens.

[101] *RE* I s.v. Aglaias, with Fıratlı-Robert, 137. On Heracles in Megarian colonies, cf. Hanell (1934) 202–3.

[102] Fıratlı-Robert, 137.

[103] Schönert (1966) 178.

[104] *IByz* 37.

[105] Łajtar, *IByz*, p. 72; Robert (1978) 522–9.

[106] So Łajtar, *IByz*, p. 72.

[107] Mango (1985) 20 and (1995) 12.

Fig. 1.2. Byzantium, heifer (Io?) and dolphin obverse, incuse square reverse. Late fifth–fourth century BC. Schönert-Geiss, 128. 5.25g. Heberden Coin Room. With permission of the Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford.

We should not assume, however, that these stories mattered to Byzantines only when it served the useful purpose of ingratiating local elites with the emperor. Very likely, these traditions were, from the start, an important means of expressing a vibrant civic identity. Byzantium's early coinage, which began in the late fifth or early fourth century, depicted on its obverse a heifer (cow, ox, or bull), standing above a dolphin (see Fig. 1.2).[108] Svoronos argued that the coins represented Io's passage across the Bosporus, and the view is often accepted today.[109] If correct, we can observe the vitality of the Bosporus' local traditions already in the fifth century BC. The type, however, was connected by Schönert-Geiss with Byzantium's local economy: the cow relating to Byzantium's rich agricultural hinterland and the dolphin evoking the Bosporus' wealth in fish. While cows have mythological associations with Io, she noted that dolphins have no such significance at the Bosporus.[110]

[108] Schönert-Geiss I, 1–856, 871–913, 951–78. The present discussion of Byzantium's early coins and their relation to the Io myth is based on my discussion in Russell (2012), esp. 135–7.

[109] Svoronos (1889) 74–7; see also Head, *HN*^{2} 266, 268, Yalouris (1986) 5, no. 5, and Yalouris *LIMC* V s.v. Io I, 666, no. 17. On Io, see Belfiore (2009) 297, with testimonia.

[110] Schönert (1966); see also Schönert-Geiss I, pp. 3 n. 5, 75, and cf. Miller (1897) 326–7.

This, however, is not quite true. In fact, it is possible to identify two spots along the Bosporus, named 'the Cow' and 'the Dolphin', located directly opposite one another, corresponding to the two points of Io's passage across the Bosporus. The place named Bous, near Chrysopolis, is said by Polybius to have been the location where Io first stood after swimming the channel.[111] Other sources identify the area with the location where a stone memorial in the shape of a heifer, carrying an epigram, was erected in honour of the mistress of the fourth-century Athenian general Chares, who, we have seen, was at the Bosporus in 340 to support Byzantium against Philip II. His mistress was nicknamed Boidion, the diminutive of Bous, and the epigram began: 'I am not the image of the cow, the daughter of Inachus, nor is the facing Bosporian sea named after me.'[112] Directly opposite was a place named Delphin or Carandas, whose names are explained by Dionysius as follows: at this location a lyre-player named Chalcis arrived and, in a parallel of the Arion tale, decked out in his equipment began to play the 'Orthian Strain'. A dolphin, hearing the song, moved into earshot of the melody (at the European shore), in order to see who was making it. The melody pleased it so much that it rose up out of the sea onto land to listen, then, when it had ended, the dolphin returned to the sea and 'to its own recesses' (*εἰς τὰ ἤθη τὰ ἑαυτοῦ*). A shepherd named Carandas then killed the dolphin, and Chalcis buried it at the place where it died.[113] The name Delphin was therefore explicitly connected with a location just across from Bous, in precisely the location from which Io would have crossed from if she landed at 'the Cow'. Very likely, the coin types allude precisely to Io's crossing from one shore to the other.[114]

This interpretation may shed fresh light on the friendly rivalry between Byzantium and Chalcedon. Chalcedon's coins of this time, which were contemporary with Byzantium's issues, carried similar types: a cow standing above a sheaf of corn, with the same reverse (see Fig. 1.3).[115] Unlike Byzantium's cow, whose front leg is always raised, as if moving forwards (crossing the strait), Chalcedon's cow

[111] Pol. 4.43.3–10.
[112] Dion. Byz. 110–11; Hsch. §§29–30 (transl. Berger 2013).
[113] Dion. Byz. 42.
[114] This is the argument of Russell (2012), where further references to the various toponyms are cited.
[115] Head, *HN*^{2} 512.

Fig. 1.3. Chalcedon, ox/heifer standing above a sheaf of corn obverse, incuse square reverse. Late fifth–fourth century BC. 5.21g. Heberden Coin Room. With permission of the Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford.

(or bull) is stationary. Polybius shows that the site named Bous, on Chalcedon's side of the strait, was popularly connected with the myth of Io. Though the story by necessity involved two sides of the strait, there would be no need for Chalcedon to explicitly draw attention to any location on the European side: the cow itself would denote Io, and perhaps recall the site of her landing. On the other side of the strait, it was in Byzantium's interests to emphasize that Io's passage must have involved both shores, in order to attract to itself some of the prestige of the legend. Consequently, the Byzantines looked for a location directly opposite Bous, from which Io would have begun her passage. It was perhaps at this time that the story of Chalcis and the dolphin was invented and associated with a spot already held as sacred (to Apollo: note the Apolline motifs in the story of Chalcis and the dolphin—colonization, the lyre, and the dolphin).[116] This will have created a suitable symbol which could be represented on coins as the beginning of Io's passage, allowing the Byzantines to depict both sides of the strait. Hence Byzantium's coins emphasize that Io left from a location named Delphin; whereas Chalcedon's avoided making any acknowledgement that Io began her passage on the European side. Such an interpretation fits precisely with how both cities competed in attracting locations connected with the Argonauts, such as Hieron, to

[116] Belfiore (2009) 306–7 notes the connection between the lyre and Apollo, as well as the sacredness of dolphins to Apollo.

their own shores.[117] It is not coincidental that Chalcedon's coin types first begin to represent a cow at the same time Byzantium started to mint: Byzantium's early coin types were the direct cause of or a reaction to Chalcedon's representations of Io on its coinage.

If this is right, then Byzantium's early coin types relate to the mythology of the Bosporus, representing Io's passage and evoking Byzantium's own command of the strait. The coins show that by this stage, Byzantium had come to view itself as the mistress of the Bosporus, as it was viewed later by Polybius. The origins of Byzantium's local identity as the 'famed city of the Land of Inachus', which was publicized abroad in the second century AD, must be sought much earlier, in the fifth century BC, and in the activities of the Athenian Empire, whose imperial centralizing tendency, I suggest, encouraged this regional association. It is no coincidence that the spot represented on Byzantium's coinage, the area between Delphin and Bous, was also associated with control over the Bosporus—this was the location of Athens' toll station in the fifth century, Chrysopolis. The withdrawal of the financial institutions established at the Bosporus in the fifth century, discussed in the following chapter, sparked a revival of this spirit of local civic competition, analogous to the impact of Hadrian's visit to the city much later.[118] Our evidence from the Bosporus, particularly the text of Dionysius, thus shows that Greek communities could conceive of their heroic pasts and their identities in ways which were intimately connected to their local region, and which we can therefore rarely recover. It is only thanks to Dionysius that we can observe this phenomenon at the Bosporus.

[117] Note on this Robu (2014c) 199, who rightly connects Argonautic traditions along the strait with a desire by the Byzantines to legitimize their own purchase of Hieron in the third century and to justify their exploitation of the site for financial reasons.

[118] Dan (2013) 89 discusses the reference to the Bosporus in Euripides' *Medea*, and considers that discussion of the strait in Athens in the late fifth century derived from Athenian interest in the area.

2

Taxation and Extortion

The Bosporus and the Delian League

> When you were listening to these affairs at that time in the assembly from both the speakers themselves and their supporters; since indeed the merchants and naukleroi were ready to sail out of the Pontus, and the Byzantines and Chalcedonians and Cyzicenes were forcing their ships to put in to their ports because of their own private shortage of grain; seeing also that the price of grain was rising in the Peiraeius, and that there was not very much to be bought, you voted that the trierarchs should launch their ships and bring them up to the pier, and that the councillors and the demarchs should make out lists of the demesmen and report on the number of available seamen, and that the expedition should be sent out immediately, to help the various regions.[1]

As this passage shows, the phenomena discussed in the previous chapter had a series of important consequences for the historical development of the communities of the Bosporus. As a sea lane of vital significance to commerce between Greece and the Black Sea, mercantile shipping was constantly passing through the strait. More important than the sheer number of traders passing through, however, is the fact that they were forced to wait in the various harbours and indentations of the Bosporus for favourable conditions before they could complete their journey. At the Golden Horn, Hieron, Chalcedon, Hestiai just before Rumeli Hisarı (characterized by Dion. Byz. 53 as one last safe refuge for sailors before reaching the 'Devil's Current'),

[1] [Dem.] 50.6 (transl. Murray, Loeb, adapted).

in the gulf of Moukaporis (which, says Dion. Byz. 96, possessed a λιμὴν πάνυ καλός), or any number of other harbours along the strait, sailors would be forced to put in for sometimes extended periods if the winds suddenly changed. The twelve stops ascribed to the Argonauts, from this perspective, do not seem so unrealistic. If someone looked out over the Golden Horn, they would overlook the massed ships waiting at anchor for changes in the winds, or for their crews to return from the inns, brothels, and shops of the city. Fleets of ships are, and always have been, one of the chief characteristics of Istanbul.

The presence of numerous ships and traders had a profound effect on Byzantium's prosperity and on the region's economy. Sailors needed to buy food, stay at inns, gamble, sleep with prostitutes, repair their ships, exchange money, and engage in any number of other economic activities. Where the dominating northerly winds and currents of the strait forced sailors to wait for long periods of time at anchor, the number of economic transactions which the sailors carried out increased dramatically. These activities could of course be subject to state taxes, and they would also create new markets and increase demand for goods and services, attracting people to live in the cities around ports, and sustaining the cities demographically.

From a state-centric point of view, massed ships were useful for other purposes. The *polis* of Byzantium was fully capable of not only taxing economic activity within its own harbours, but was also willing to levy tolls for use of the Bosporus itself. Large convoys of ships were, moreover, ready prey for pirates, who could count on the seasonal passage of shipping through the strait and would plan their activities around it. In the passage quoted at the beginning of this chapter, from *Against Polycles*, Apollodorus outlines how various different agents—Byzantines, Chalcedonians, Cyzicenes—simultaneously attempted to exploit the fleets passing through the Bosporus by forcing them into their harbours (καταγόντων τὰ πλοῖα) and there forcing them to either unload their cargoes or pay a tax on the goods carried. One consequence was grain shortage in Athens and a rise in the price of food at Peiraeius, which prompted the Athenians to dispatch a fleet to escort the merchant ships. However, it was not merely local powers who perceived the potential profits attached to exploitation of the passing fleets, and over the course of the fifth and fourth centuries other agents involved themselves at the strait. Byzantium and the Bosporus were thus caught uneasily between a combination of

different pressures, exerted by robber bands, the Athenian Empire, the Persian Empire, individual generals, rival local *poleis*, and the Thracian kingdom of Odrysia, all of whom were hoping for a piece of this pie.[2]

In this chapter, I explore the remarkable level of interest taken by the Athenian Empire in the Bosporus in the fifth century. The Athenian Empire utilized a series of institutions concentrated at Byzantium to tax and control the strait. The Athenians imposed a toll on ships passing through the strait, stationed watchers (probably with armed guards) to control exports from Byzantium, developed customs houses, cereal trading complexes, and currency exchanges at the Bosporus, and directly taxed Byzantium to an extent proportional with the economic prosperity created by the fleets passing through the strait.[3] At the Bosporus, which formed the northernmost limit of the Athenian Hellespontine tribute district, stretching from Lamponeia in the Troad to the mouth of the Black Sea, the institutions which the Athenians imposed were centralized in an attempt to profit from the fleets passing through the strait.

Athens was not, however, the only power interested in the strait. Massed fleets of ships grouped together at a chokepoint also meant that the Bosporus became a target for a series of individual adventurers and privateers, seeking to exploit for themselves the unique opportunities offered by the strait. Why, then, were the Athenians' policies viewed as the legitimate prerogative of an imperial power, while their immediate predecessors were stigmatized as illegal pirates? This chapter explores the distinction between taxation and extortion, and suggests that very little in the day-to-day operation of taxation or coercion at Byzantium, other than its scale, separated Athens from the illegal pirates and would-be tyrants who attempted to control the Bosporus before and after her. The Athenian Empire merely legitimated the exercise of organized violence within the Propontis by the imposition of something which may have approached a 'bureaucracy', setting important precedents which would be taken up by the locals in the following centuries. As Tilly notes, a protection

[2] Thuc. 2.97 for the extent of Odrysia's territory. The Thracians located just north of Byzantium were Odrysians: Xen. *An.* 7.5.1. Cf. Merle (1916) 22, Isaac (1986) 226, and Archibald (1998) 79–81. Note Gabrielsen (2007) 289, on the 'tendency of cumulative pressures—just like ominous clouds—to concentrate at the Thracian Bosporos and especially at Byzantion'.

[3] See especially Gabrielsen (2007).

racket, piracy, and banditry belong on the same spectrum as war-making and legitimate taxation. The only real difference between a racketeer and a government is that the latter has succeeded in monopolizing the means of violence in an area.[4] In this sense, the Athenian Empire was the greatest pirate of them all.

2.1 PIRATES, TYRANTS, KINGS

When Persian control of the Bosporus broke down during the Ionian Revolt (499–93 BC), Histiaeus of Miletus, having been expelled from Miletus, gathered to himself eight triremes from Lesbos, then went to Byzantium and became a pirate, seizing ships sailing out of the Black Sea. He remained here for four years, exploiting the upheaval caused by the revolt, until the battle of Lade when he fled to Chios, leaving behind his subordinate Bisaltes of Abydos in the strait.[5] What was Histiaeus hoping to achieve? Herodotus' account is woefully brief, and has given rise to a variety of interpretations. Heinlein thought that Histiaeus was appropriating grain supplies from the Pontus to feed a starving Ionia.[6] Others have seen in his actions an attempt to found a personal dynasty in the Bosporus with himself as tyrant, similar to that of Miltiades Senior at the Chersonese, prefiguring the accusations levelled against Pausanias.[7] He may also have been aiming to damage the Milesians for expelling him: the ships he seized are called Ionian 'merchant ships' sailing out of the Pontus (Hdt. 6.26: *τὰς Ἰώνων ὁλκάδας ἐκπλεύσας τοῦ Πόντου*), perhaps an oblique reference to lively trade between Miletus and its numerous colonies in the Black Sea.

Another possibility is that Histiaeus had been set up in the Propontis with the backing of the Milesians, and that his piratical activity was an attempt to secure the strait and free passage on behalf of the Ionians.[8] Herodotus, who withholds moral condemnation of

[4] Tilly (1985) 170–1, and *passim* for an insightful treatment of this topic.

[5] Hdt. 6.5, 26.

[6] Heinlein (1909) 347; but cf. Chapter 2.2, pp. 73–5, on the lack of direct fifth-century evidence for Pontic grain.

[7] Merle (1916) 13 and Newskaja (1955) 68–9.

[8] This is suggested by Andrewes (1956) 127, Berve I (1967) 86–7, and O. Murray (1988) 'The Ionian Revolt', *CAH* IV^2, 487; cf. Burn (1985) 208.

Histiaeus' piratical activities (the word *leistes* is not used), says merely that it became his business, his πρήγματα, to seize ships 'except for those which were ready to assert to Histiaeus that they would be obedient' (Hdt. 6.5: πλὴν ἢ ὅσοι αὐτῶν Ἱστιαίῳ ἔφασαν ἕτοιμοι εἶναι πείθεσθαι). Very likely, this phrase is a euphemism for the payment of a toll, couched in terms of seeking alliance with the ships' captains, which Histiaeus extorted from the merchants in exchange for safe passage.[9] That is, Histiaeus established for himself a business exacting a toll on passing ships, guaranteeing in exchange for payment that he would leave the ships unmolested. Perhaps he also undertook to protect them from other predators in the area, such as the Persians or non-Ionian ships. Operating ships from Byzantium, Histiaeus, in this scenario, ran a protection racket, preventing pirates other than those approved by him (such as his Lesbian triremes) from operating. In this way, his aim was to exploit a local resource—the fleets passing through the Bosporus. Although Histiaeus was merely the first in a long series of powers and individuals to attempt to corner this market, he illustrates how little of a gap could exist between piracy and the legitimate taxation of Black Sea trade. If Histiaeus was extorting a toll, it was in all likelihood an early version of the toll later collected at the Bosporus by the Athenian Empire. The fact that it was eventually adopted by a legitimate power does not make it any less of a form of *leisteia*: the only difference was that Athens would succeed in monopolizing the exercise of organized violence within the Propontis, now officially defined as the Athenian Hellespontine district, whereas Histiaeus had not, relying on his Lesbian triremes.

Within two decades, another rogue individual chose Byzantium as his base of operations. Pausanias, the Spartan regent who had taken up residence in Byzantium following the battle of Plataea in 478, was expelled from the city by 471/0, perhaps earlier. A difficult passage of Justin, epitomizing the *origines Byzantii* of Pompeius Trogus, claims that the city was first founded by Pausanias (who is also incorrectly called a Spartan king), and that after its foundation he remained in

[9] So Scott (2005) 71–2, 87, 141, who notes that we are dealing here with a toll. Isaac (1986) 223–4 states that Histiaeus 'is also the first on record as having exploited his control of the Bosporos to intercept shipping of his *enemies*' (my emphasis). However, the word 'enemies' is not used, and it is likely that Histiaeus' actions were directed more generally at all those using the Bosporus, rather than just his enemies.

possession of the city for seven years.[10] This episode has caused a great deal of chronological confusion, largely deriving from a papyrus fragment of Ephorus which claims that the expulsion from Byzantium of Pausanias by Cimon immediately preceded the attack on Eion, the first action of the Delian League, formed in 478/7.[11] This presumes that Cimon first expelled Pausanias before proceeding to Eion. If so, then Pausanias cannot have been expelled later than 476/5, the date of this attack.[12] Some have also found it inconceivable that the Athenians would have allowed a rogue like Pausanias to control such a strategically important site as Byzantium for this length of time—possession first of Sestos then of Byzantium would have allowed Pausanias and the Greek fleet to control both straits, and therefore the entire Propontis.[13] Consequently, various attempts have been made to reduce the number of years given by Justin to two or three.[14] Although a long stay by Pausanias in Byzantium need not be excluded, this problem will probably remain impossible to solve conclusively.[15]

Whatever chronology we accept, the course of events which followed Pausanias' capture of Byzantium is notoriously difficult.[16] Our most detailed ancient source is Thucydides, who says that once in

[10] Justin 9.1.3: *Haec namque urbs condita primo a Pausania rege Spartanorum, et per septem annos possessa fuit*. Diod. 11.44 places everything in one year, 477/6.

[11] *P. Oxy.* 13.1610 F 6 = *FGrHist* 70 F 191.

[12] Fornara (1966) makes the case that this chronology is incompatible with the course of events in Thucydides, leaving mere months for Pausanias to exchange letters with the King, to travel around Thrace, for the embassies from Sparta to arrive, and above all to become sufficiently detested by the allies for them to request that Athens take over.

[13] Wilamowitz (1893) I, 145: 'the Athenians could hardly have left this tyrant to control both straits [Pausanias had also subdued Sestos], and allow him to conspire with the Persians in Thrace and in Asia; they must have intervened quickly, and for this we have good reason to exclude a long reign of Pausanias' (transl. mine).

[14] Merle (1916) 17 (476 BC); *ATL* III, 158–60 (477 BC); Lippold (1965) 339–41 (476/5 BC); White (1964) 144 (477 BC); cf. Meyer (1899) 60, who has Pausanias remain for nine years.

[15] For a long stay: Meiggs (1972) 72–3; Fornara (1966) 271; Smart (1967) 137; P.J. Rhodes, 'The Delian League to 449 B.C.' *CAH* V^2 46; D.M. Lewis, 'Chronological notes', *CAH* V^2 499; Łajtar, *IByz*, p. 34.

[16] Reflecting the number of interpretations, the bibliography on Pausanias' two sojourns at Byzantium is copious. The items most relevant to my discussion are: Wilamowitz (1893) I, 145–6; Meyer (1899) 59–60; Beloch, *Gr. Ges.* II^2, 155–9; Merle (1916) 15–17; Gomme (1945) I, 271, 433; Newskaja (1955) 71–4; *ATL* III, 191–3, 206; de Ste. Croix (1972) 171–4; Lippold (1965); Fornara (1966); Lang (1967); Rhodes (1970); Cawkwell (1970) 49–59; Meiggs (1972) 72–3, 465–7; Loomis (1990); Hornblower, *ACT* I, 211–19; Łajtar, *IByz*, p. 34; Demir (2009).

control of Byzantium, Pausanias began to reveal the violence inherent to his character (*βιαίου ὄντος*), disillusioning the allies, especially the Ionians (*οὐκ ἥκιστα οἱ Ἴωνες*). As a consequence the allied states asked Athens to take over leadership of the alliance from Sparta. Probably this was only the Ionians: Thucydides says that they depended on ties of kinship with Athens in making their appeal, and the Dorian Byzantines were enamoured with Pausanias.[17] The ephors recalled Pausanias to Sparta, and he returned, leaving behind as his confidant in Byzantium the Eretrian Gongylos. He was tried on the charge of attempting to set himself up as dictator and of collaborating with Persia, and acquitted. Dorcis replaced Pausanias as head of the fleet, but Sparta, now afraid of her commanders becoming corrupted abroad, withdrew from the alliance, allowing Athens to assume the leadership. The first tribute assessment followed. In Thucydides' account, Pausanias' poor behaviour abroad constitutes the direct reason for Athens' assumption of leadership of the Hellenic League.[18] The transference of hegemony over the Greeks from Sparta to Athens, the genesis of the Athenian Empire, is thereby distilled to the questionable behaviour of an individual.

The details of Pausanias' behaviour are given by Thucydides in his famous Herodotean digression on Pausanias and Themistocles. After he was recalled and acquitted in Sparta for the first time, Pausanias returned to Byzantium in an unofficial capacity (*ἰδίᾳ*). Here he returned to his 'arrogant' ways: he intrigued with the King, aiming to become 'ruler of all Hellas'; he returned intimates of the King who had been taken prisoner at Byzantium, hoping to gain favour at the Persian court; he wore Persian dress and took a bodyguard, touring Thrace, and behaved in Byzantium as a tyrant; finally, he was said to have been intriguing to incite the helots.[19] Thucydides even cites as evidence letters between Pausanias and the King, in which Pausanias requested the hand of Xerxes' daughter in marriage. Recalled once again by Sparta and driven from Byzantium by the Athenians, he went to Colonae in the Troad where he conspired again with Persia, before returning to Sparta where he was put to death.[20]

[17] Cf. Chapter 6.1 on Pausanias' claim to have 'founded' the city, and his probable posthumous cult honours there.
[18] Thuc. 1.94–6.
[19] 'And so he was' (*καὶ ἦν δὲ οὕτως*), says Thucydides (1.132.4).
[20] Thuc. 1.128–35; cf. Meiggs (1972) 72–3.

The possibility arises that Pausanias perceived the strategic significance offered by the site of Byzantium, and aimed to exploit its location on the Bosporus to secure his own position. Our other sources follow Thucydides in claiming that Pausanias' haughtiness caused the withdrawal of Sparta from leadership of the alliance, and it may be that these accusations are a reflection of his attempts to turn the city and the strait into his own personal fiefdom.[21] Herodotus claims that a cousin of Darius was betrothed to Pausanias, at the time when he had his heart set on becoming 'master of Hellas'; he also mentions that Pausanias had arrogantly set up a golden bowl to himself at the entrance to the Black Sea.[22] In another anecdote Pausanias insolently demanded that he be permitted a Byzantine girl of noble family, Cleonice. As she made her way toward Pausanias in the dark, she accidentally knocked over a lamp, startling Pausanias who stabbed her in panic.[23] The girl's spirit haunted Pausanias to his death, but, more importantly, the affair is said by Plutarch to have provoked the allies immensely, encouraging Cimon to expel Pausanias from the city.[24]

We have, then, a string of sources which attribute the break-up of the Greek alliance to Pausanias' *hybris*. Thucydides' account, however, is difficult to accept; like Histiaeus' adventure at Byzantium, it is unclear what Pausanias was actually up to. Beloch poured scorn on the digression.[25] He called the letter between Pausanias and the King 'eine groBe Fälschung', noting that the possibility of Pausanias marrying a daughter of the Persian King was absurd.[26] Yet the most

[21] Nepos, *Paus.* 1–3 derives from Thucydides' account, as does Diod. 11.44. Cf. Plut. *Arist.* 23.

[22] Hdt. 4.81.3. This krater carried an epigram which referred to Pausanias as the 'ruler of broad Hellas' (ἄρχων Ἑλλάδος εὐρυχόρου), and recalled his ancestry from Heracles (Athen. 12.536a = *IByz* 7). A similar epigram was allegedly originally inscribed upon the tripod dedicated by the allies at Delphi after Plataea (Thuc. 1.132.2; *Anth. Pal.* 6.197).

[23] Plut. *Cim.* 6; Paus. 3.17.8.

[24] Meyer (1899) 59.

[25] Beloch, *Gr. Ges.* II^2, 155–9. It was not until the 1960s that Beloch's criticism of Thucydides' reliability became more widely accepted. Meiggs (1972) 465–6 noted that if any historian other than Thucydides had written this digression, it would never have been taken seriously. The various problems with the account are set out by Lang (1967) and Cawkwell (1970) 50–1. Westlake (1977) posits a written source to explain these difficulties and Thucydides' peculiar, Ionian vocabulary.

[26] 'It is as if Theodore Roosevelt wanted to marry a daughter of the King of England . . . ' (at p. 155, transl. mine). Hdt. 5.32 has the more believable alternative that the girl was a daughter of the satrap of Phrygia Megabates, though this remains

unsettling feature of the Pausanias digression remains Thucydides' apparent credulity. For once, Hornblower notes, Herodotus appears the more critical of the two, saying that Pausanias' insufferable behaviour, his *hybris*, was seized upon as a pretext (πρόφασις) to deprive Sparta of the leadership.[27] The author of the *Ath. Pol.* likewise claims that Aristides and the Athenians used the opportunity provided by Pausanias to detach the Ionian allies from Sparta.[28]

Despite the problems with Thucydides' account, it has in the past been thought that these anecdotes derive from some reality, and that Pausanias had hoped to use the strategic position of Byzantium to become a tyrant, king of his own little empire in the north, supported by the Persians who would guarantee the Asiatic banks of the Bosporus. Possibly he even had designs on Greece itself.[29] From this perspective, the Pausanias episode is a striking indicator of the strategic and economic importance of the strait in antiquity. Of course it is much more likely that Pausanias' arrogance was precisely the *prophasis* which Herodotus claimed it to be. A struggle over the leadership erupted at Byzantium, the Ionian allies hoping to remove Sparta from a position of power, and Pausanias' misdeeds, real or imaginary, became a convenient excuse to replace Sparta with Athens—a way to portray the Athenians' assumption of the leadership not as something which they sought, but as something which Pausanias' behaviour forced upon them. If there was any truth to the rumours of medism on the part of Pausanias, then it was as a response to the manoeuvres of his enemies and an effort to cling to power.[30]

Yet for the purposes of this monograph, these issues are less important than what Pausanias hoped to accomplish by taking control of the Bosporus. Why did he pick Byzantium? What was he actually doing there to incur such hostility? Or is it believable that Pausanias' personal misdeeds were, on their own, sufficient to lead to his expulsion by the Athenians? The only hard evidence that Pausanias had any dealings with Persia is the fact that his confidant,

unlikely in the extreme ('if indeed the story has any truth to it', εἰ δὴ ἀληθής γέ ἐστι ὁ λόγος, Herodotus remarks). Cf. Hornblower, *ACT* I, 214.

[27] Hdt. 8.3.2, with Andrewes (1978) 92 and Hornblower, *ACT* I, 141.

[28] [Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 23.4–5.

[29] Merle (1916) 16; Miltner (1935) 8–9; Newskaja (1955) 74. The view depends on the now questionable idea that Pausanias in the early fifth century could cut off the Pontic grain exports on which Greece relied: cf. Chapter 2.2, pp. 73–5.

[30] This is the argument of Demir (2009).

Gongylos, whom he left in charge of Byzantium during his recall, was later given a 'fief' by Persia.[31] Save for the Histiaeus interlude during the Ionian Revolt, this was the first time that Persia did not control both sides of the strait. Instead, the Greeks held Byzantium, while the allied navy was in command of the sea; for a certain amount of time the Persians retained the Asiatic side. The expulsion of Pausanias represents the moment at which hegemony over Greece passed to Athens; the moment when the Athenians solidified their position as a maritime power. Thucydides, discussing the mythical Minos, founder of the Cycladic *poleis*, claims that the rise of Hellenic sea power was connected to a decline in piracy, as states required free sea-lanes in order to secure their own revenues, πρόσοδοι.[32] *Poleis* began to insert themselves into the process, monopolizing maritime violence in order to delegitimize other pirates and derive their own revenues from seaborne trade, bringing greater stability to sea travel in addition to profiting from shipping. Pausanias' expulsion from Byzantium fell at a time when the growth of Greek naval power, in the form of the Greek fleet which had just defeated the Persians, was beginning to stabilize sea travel, permitting the development of trade links throughout the Mediterranean, and it is likely that his appropriation of Byzantium and the Bosporus destabilized seaborne travel between the Propontis and the Black Sea. For Athens, the prospective maritime power, it was a potential πρόσοδος, a toll on shipping, which gave Byzantium and the Bosporus their economic significance. Pausanias' very presence at Byzantium may have made the collection of this potential revenue impossible: if he retained possession of Byzantium, other powers could not use the city as a customs house or manipulate its position on the strait to benefit from passing trade. It is worth noting that the name Chrysopolis, which was the site of Athens' fifth-century customs house just opposite Byzantium on the Asiatic coast, derived according to Dionysius from its function under the Persian Empire. Here, according to one version, the Persians collected gold from the cities in the region.[33] If so, then the strait was already being taxed *prior* to Histiaeus and Pausanias' misadventures at Byzantium, and the Persians could have served as precedent for both. Preventing the collection of a maritime toll would have been enough to incur

[31] Xen. *Hell.* 3.1.6; *An.* 7.8.8. Noted by Andrewes (1978) 93 and Hornblower, *ACT* I, 214.

[32] Thuc. 1.4.

[33] Dion. Byz. 109.

the hostility of the allies, particularly the Ionians (again compare Histiaeus, who harried Ionian merchantmen), and could have served to provoke the Athenians into expelling Pausanias. It also helps to explain the hostility toward Pausanias in the sources. A charge of tyranny allowed Athens to disguise her own imposition of a revenue-raising system on the strait as the expulsion of a pro-Persian tyrant, and later to depict this extortion as a benefaction to her loyal allies.

This is of course tentative, but even if there is no truth to the suggestion, the whole Pausanias episode is instructive because it highlights the tendency for the political opponents of those who possessed control of the Bosporus to use words like 'tyrant' or '*hybris*' in order to delegitimize their enemies. Very likely, the extreme reaction to Pausanias' actions at Byzantium reflects, at least in part, the perceived strategic and economic significance attached to the area: the fear that a rogue like Pausanias might destabilize the local economy, encourage other local powers to begin extorting passing fleets, and make trade between the Black Sea and Greece dangerous or impossible. The motif recurs whenever the Bosporus becomes an object of contest. The best examples are the two brief 'reigns of terror' of Clearchus the Spartan *proxenos* and harmost of Byzantium, in 409/08 and 403/02. During the Decelean War, King Agis, observing the grain ships sailing into Peiraieus, sent Clearchus north to the Bosporus to cut off Athens' Pontic grain imports.[34] He remained in control of the city until 408, when Alcibiades besieged and captured Chalcedon, Selymbria, and Byzantium.[35] During the winter of 409 Clearchus left to meet Pharnabazus, and in his absence democratic partisans betrayed the city to Athens.[36] As with Pausanias, the sources criticize Clearchus for his conduct in the city. According to Xenophon,

[34] Xen. *Hell.* 1.1.35–6.

[35] Xen. *Hell.* 1.3.8–9; Diod. 13.66.3; Plut. *Alc.* 31. Alcibiades' treaty with Selymbria: *IG* I[3] 118; cf. Xen. *Hell.* 1.3.10 and Diod. 13.66.4. On the campaigns of Alcibiades in the Hellespont, cf. Andrewes (1953) and Bloedow (1973) 56–66; on *stasis* between the democratic and oligarchic partisans within Byzantium at this time, cf. Gehrke (1985) 35–6. For the motives behind Clearchus' expedition, cf. Bosworth (1997).

[36] Xen. *Hell.* 1.3; Diod. 13.64.2–3, 66.1–6; Plut. *Alc.* 31.3–8; Polyaen. 1.47.2; Frontin. 3.11.3. It is possible that this episode is the subject of a fragment of the *Hell. Oxy.* (5.2, fragment C), which seems to be an account of a clandestine communication between someone within a besieged city and the army outside. The agent of the attacking army is either an exile called *Μυνδος*, or a man from Myndos in Caria. A temple of Demeter and Kore mentioned in the fragment suggests Byzantium: Dion. Byz. 13 attests such a sanctuary. For this possibility, cf. Bruce (1967) 45–9.

one of the democratic partisans who opened the gates to Alcibiades, Anaxilaos, was later put on trial in Sparta, and defended his conduct by arguing that he was a Byzantine, not a Spartan, forced to watch as Clearchus diverted food from starving women and children to the Spartan garrison.[37] We know, however, that the primary purpose of Clearchus' presence in the region was to cut off Athens' food supply. Once again, the negative reaction to Clearchus' conduct in Byzantium may reflect his destabilizing effect on the Bosporus' maritime economy. As with Pausanias, the hostility in the sources is perhaps a reflection of the fact that he had effectively closed the strait, preventing the grain ships from reaching Greece, and thereby endangering the free movement of shipping.

Clearchus' second period of misrule in Byzantium mirrors even more closely the career of Pausanias. According to Polyaenus, Clearchus was fined by the ephors for the loss of Byzantium. While he was lolling drunk in Lampsacus, the local oligarchs, put in power by Lysandros, invited him back to aid them against the local Thracians, and he took the city by treachery.[38] What followed is generally referred to as a reign of terror. To suppress popular discontent toward the Spartan-backed oligarchic regime, Clearchus treacherously murdered the leaders of the opposition, and killed or banished all those with influence in the city, strangling thirty prominent individuals in public, and confiscating the property of the wealthy by forcing them into exile with false accusations.[39] All this alienated even the oligarchs who had requested Spartan support—Diodorus calls Clearchus flatly a tyrant.[40] Responding to a fresh Byzantine appeal, the ephors at Sparta recalled Clearchus, who fled to Selymbria and Ionia, where, paralleling Pausanias, he intrigued with Cyrus. For the second time in a century, the temptations of Byzantium and the Bosporus proved too much for a Spartan abroad to resist. It is possible, but must remain

[37] Xen. *Hell.* 1.3.19; Plut. *Alc.* 31.6–8; cf. Diod. 13.66.6. See Bassett (2001) 2.

[38] Polyaen. 2.2.7; cf. Diod. 14.12.2, in which the Byzantines ask Sparta for a *strategos*, and the ephors send them Clearchus.

[39] Diod. 14.12.2–9; Polyaen. 2.2.7; Frontin. 3.5.1; cf. Xen. *An.* 1.1.9; 2.6.2–4.

[40] The identity of the thirty 'Boeotians' mentioned by Diodorus escapes us. As Bassett (2001) 6 notes, the participle ὀνομαζομένους makes it unlikely to be a corruption of 'Byzantines' (cf. Green's transl., 'thirty prominent Byzantines'; but why should Byzantines be 'named' Byzantines?). Instead, Bassett connects the group to the tradition that Boeotians were involved in the foundation of the city (cf. Chapter 6), and identifies these men as leaders of the democratic resistance to Sparta.

hypothetical, that like Pausanias, Clearchus hoped to exploit the strait to secure his own position.[41]

Within a century of each other, three individuals—Histiaeus, Pausanias, Clearchus—attempted to exploit the economically and strategically advantageous site of Byzantium, and may have profited from the ships passing through the strait. Their infamy, including the charges of tyranny, medism, *hybris*, severity, and cruelty is a reflection of the danger which controlling Byzantium and the strait posed to the rest of Greece. In a similar fashion, Thrasybulus, having won over Amodocus of Odrysia and Seuthes to Athens during the Corinthian War, arrived at the strait in 389, where he found that both Byzantium and Chalcedon lay open to him. Democratic partisans within the city gave it over to Athens.[42] The first thing Thrasybulus did was to re-establish the *dekate*, the 10 per cent toll on shipping administered by Athens in the fifth century at the strait.[43] This time, Thrasybulus was acting on behalf of Athens in attempting to re-establish the fifth-century Athenian monopoly over the Bosporus. In return, his political enemies accused him of attempting to establish a tyranny: Thrasybulus, according to his opponent, was advised by his friend Ergocles to relocate to the strait instead of returning to Athens to answer charges, and there to marry a daughter of Seuthes and make himself a tyrant.[44] Xenophon too, having led the Ten Thousand home through Byzantium, was tainted by the stigma of this accusation when his troops offered to 'make him great'.[45] Effectively, our sources refer directly to almost every powerful individual who stayed at Byzantium in the fifth or fourth centuries as a tyrant.

The most notorious in this series of predators is Philip II, who, in 340, failed to conquer Perinthus, subdued Selymbria, and then began

[41] For accounts of this episode, cf. Merle (1916) 32–3, Newskaja (1955) 104–5, and Gehrke (1985) 36–7. All three describe Clearchus in the same terms as Histiaeus and Pausanias—as the latest individual to attempt to form for himself a tyranny in the Bosporus (Gehrke: 'to cook his own soup'). Note, however, that Clearchus did not begin to intrigue with Persia until he was already denounced by Sparta, meaning that his medism could not have been part of a premeditated plan to become tyrant in the north with Persian support.

[42] Xen. *Hell.* 4.8.27–8, 31 (Chalcedon); Dem. 20.60–3; cf. 23.189.

[43] For the toll, cf. Chapter 2.3, pp. 81–8.

[44] Lys. 28.5; cf. Newskaja (1955) 111.

[45] Xen. *An.* 7.1.21.

a siege of Byzantium.[46] This was the occasion of his 'most lawless act' (*τὸ παρανομώτατον ἔργον*): the seizure of the fleet of corn ships bound for Athens. The total value of this fleet, consisting of 180 ships according to Theopompus, 230 according to Philochorus, was 700 talents—all massed at Hieron and waiting for favourable conditions before beginning the voyage south.[47] Chares, as we saw in Chapter 1, was present but proved ineffective.

Philip's action at Hieron, and not the siege of Byzantium itself, is cited by the ancient sources as the immediate reason for Athens to go to war.[48] In response to Philip's provocation, the Athenians tore down the *stelai* which contained the Peace of Philocrates, and voted to make an alliance with Byzantium and to send a fleet north against Philip. What was Philip hoping to achieve in exchange for goading Athens into war? Didymus claims that Philip had two objectives: to deprive the Athenians of their grain supply (*σιτοπομπίαν*), and 'so that they might not have any coastal *poleis* for their fleet' (*καὶ ἵνα μὴ πόλεις ἔχωσιν ἐπιθαλαττίους ναυτικῷ*).[49] However great a blow as the seizure of the grain fleet might have been to Athens, Philip could not permanently starve Athens into obedience unless he possessed longer-term control of the strait, and the second of these objectives could permit this. He aimed, therefore, to monopolize extortion in the area, by claiming all locations along the strait and the northern Marmara coast: Byzantium, Perinthus, Selymbria, and the 'coastal cities for their fleet', including the Bosporus elbows. This would permit him to take control of the passage into the Black Sea, and by taking control of the strait he could cause food crisis in Athens, just as Clearchus had done at the close of the Peloponnesian War. Philip had

[46] Ephorus' account of the siege of Perinthus is preserved in Diod. 16.74.2–76.4; modern treatments: Hammond and Griffith (1979) 571–3; Cawkwell (1978) 135–6; Ellis (1976) 174–5; Hammond (1994) 132. On the siege of Byzantium: Newskaja (1955) 124–31; Ellis (1976) 174–82; Hammond and Griffith (1979) 575–80; Cawkwell (1978) 135–40; Hammond (1994) 131–5. Dion. Byz. 14 claims that a Philip of Macedon destroyed a temple of Pluto at Byzantium. Following Dumitru (2006), this is probably to be connected with a siege by Philip V in 200/199.

[47] Didymus, *Dem.* 10.34–11.5 = *FGrHist* 115 F 292; 328 F 162; cf. Dem. 18.138; [Dem.] 11.1 et schol. Justin 9.1 has 170 ships. On the tendency for ships to mass at Hieron, cf. Chapter 1; on this episode, cf. Bresson (1994) and Moreno (2007a) 207, with the long n. 298.

[48] Didymus (above, n. 47); Dem. 18.71–2.

[49] Didymus, *Dem.* 10.35–11.5; cf. Dem. 18.241: *τῆς σιτοπομπίας τῶν Ἑλλήνων κύριος*.

earlier alleged that the Athenians had been inciting the Byzantines to act against Philip's interests.[50] It is likely that the Byzantines had turned to piracy prior to the siege, either on their own behalf or that of Athens. During the fourth century, we have seen, they had been forcing ships to put into their own harbour and unload their cargoes on their journey through the strait.[51] One of Philip's aims was to take for himself the Byzantines' and Athenians' staging posts along the Marmara and Bosporus coasts, in order to establish his own protection racket in the Propontis. Doing so would deal a serious blow to Athens' food supply and her ability to safely import from the north, an ability which had already been weakened by the Social War fifteen years prior.

As this indicates, the Bosporus was too tempting a target for would-be pirates and toll-collectors to resist, and attracted different kinds of predators who hoped to exploit the fleets passing through the strait: the local *poleis*, Athens, Philip, individual admirals, and pirates. Byzantium had, it appears, been waylaying merchants and forcing them to pay a toll during the latter part of the fourth century, though the Byzantines had been competing with local rivals, the Chalcedonians and Cyzicenes, who were also attempting to extort tolls. This is why Chares was already present at the strait before the declaration of war: he was there to escort the fleet down from Hieron and protect it not only from Philip, but from the Byzantines and these other powers.[52] This also helps to explain an otherwise obscure passage of Clement of Alexandria, which suggests that Aetheas, king of the Scythians, had warned the Byzantines in a letter to 'stop harming my revenues, or else my horses will drink your water'.[53] As Hammond and Griffith remark, Byzantium could not have been tributary to the Scythian king, and they note that the textual emendation of Bizone has been suggested as an explanation, or alternatively that the allusion is to Byzantine aid to Istros against Aetheas.[54] Perhaps, however, the Byzantines were forcing merchants travelling to and from Scythia through the strait to pay a tax or risk losing their cargoes, just as they had

[50] [Dem.] 12.16

[51] [Dem.] 50.6, 17–19; cf. [Arist.] *Oec.* 1346b 29–33.

[52] Gabrielsen (2007) 306–7; Archibald (2013) 241.

[53] Clem. Alex. *Strom.* 5.31.3. This is the same Aetheas against whom Philip waged war, when he reneged on a promise to adopt Philip as his successor in exchange for his aid in a local conflict against Istros: Justin 9.2.

[54] Hammond and Griffith (1979) 560–2.

already been doing, we have seen, to southward-bound trade.[55] Philip, if this is correct, was aiming to annex for himself the Byzantines' ability to extort Pontic trade, the first stage of which was to seize the fleet massed at Hieron. Philip's attempt to monopolize organized violence within the Propontis was a much greater threat than the seizure of a single fleet, because possession of the strait following a successful siege of Byzantium carried with it the potential to permanently shut off Greece to Pontic imports. The sieges first of Perinthus and then of Byzantium therefore carried international significance, and this is perhaps why not only Athens but Byzantium's old Social War allies, Rhodes, Chios, and Cos, as well as Tenedos and even the Persians sent aid to the cities.[56]

Ultimately, if this is correct, then Philip's objectives did not differ fundamentally from those of his predecessors. Like them, and whatever his wider aims toward central Greece were, within the Bosporus he sought to exploit a local resource by monopolizing the use of extortion in the region, and thereby deal a serious blow to the Athenians' food supply. In this sense, none of these predators differed fundamentally from the Athenian Empire of the fifth century. The only real difference is that none of them were successful, or not for very long. Criticisms of Pausanias or Clearchus as tyrants, the emphasis on their *hybris* or cruelty, the depiction of Histiaeus as a traitor or of Philip as a lawbreaker were all possible because none of them attained legitimacy within the region: they continued to be viewed as outsiders, illegally exploiting the region for their own ends. Their actions demonstrate the importance and the sensitivity of this region to international trade, and the potential to derive lucrative profits from control of the strait. The frequency and consistency with which such

[55] In the third century Byzantium would go to war with Istros and Callatis over an attempt to turn the smaller city of Tomis into a 'monopoly': cf. Chapter 3.3. Economic confrontation between Scythia and the Bosporus was perhaps common.

[56] Diod. 16.77.2; Plut. *Phoc.* 14.2–5; [Plut.] *Vit. X Or.* 851; Plut. *Mor.* 542B. *IG* II^2 273 is a decree of Athens which seems to reference the *presbeis* (restored) of the Byzantines, and grants honours to the Byzantine people following the siege. Another inscription, *IG* II^2 233, is an Athenian decree concerning the inhabitants of Tenedos, freeing them from the obligations of Athens' allies in exchange for a loan and advance payment of *syntaxis* (presumably used in the war against Philip during the siege). Unlike the case of Perinthus, we possess no evidence that Persia sent any aid to Byzantium, and Alexander's response to Darius' letter (Ar. *An.* 2.14.5) mentions only that they had sent aid to Perinthus. In gratitude to Athens, the Byzantines set up honorary statues and golden crowns at the Bosporus: Dem. 18.89–90.

episodes took place at the Bosporus illustrates that this sort of activity had the potential to become a historical pattern at the strait, motivated by the economic advantages which it offered. If these individuals could cause such uproar during their tenures at the Bosporus, what could a determined imperial power accomplish with the resources and the experience to formalize taxation of the strait? In Philip's letter to Athens ([Dem.] 12), sent in 340 while he was at Perinthus, he accused the Athenians of ignoring the Byzantines' piratical activities, and claimed that the Athenians themselves 'used to send out privateers, enslave the merchants trading with us, help my adversaries, and lay waste my territory'.[57] In the context of the late fourth century, after the defections which sparked the Social War, Athens could no longer claim any legitimacy in its efforts to impose tolls on trade in this area, and efforts to do so could be painted by Philip as piracy. In the fifth century, however, the administrative apparatus of the Hellespontine district and the infrastructure built up at the Bosporus were, we shall see, designed to create the legitimate framework with which Athens could run an extortion racket and accomplish this very aim. As we saw in the passage quoted at the beginning of this chapter, during the fourth century various powers competed with one another to establish their own extortion rackets on Pontic trade. For the greater part of the fifth century, however, this role was played by a single imperial power.

2.2 THE ATHENIAN TRIBUTE LISTS

Following Pausanias' expulsion, Byzantium entered the Delian League. Literary sources fail us for most of the remainder of the fifth century until the closing stages of the Peloponnesian War. Thucydides gives a passing reference to Byzantium, mentioning that after quashing the revolt of Samos in 440 the Athenians proceeded to subdue Byzantium.[58] Fortunately, it is in this period that the tribute lists begin. Between Persia's rule at the beginning of the century and

[57] [Dem.] 12. 2, 5 (transl. Vince, Loeb).

[58] Thuc. 1.115.5, 117.3; cf. Diod. 12.27, with no mention of Byzantium. For the chronology of the revolt: Fornara (1979); cf. Shipley (1987) 113–22 for the circumstances.

Byzantium's first attested payments to the Delian League, it has traditionally been accepted on the basis of Byzantium's high tribute that this was for the city a period of rapid economic growth, given impetus by the growing importance of trade, especially the grain trade, between Greece and the Black Sea; and that the city developed on the back of this trade and its control of the strait from a minor *polis* into one of the wealthiest members of the League.[59] Such a view, though not wrong, is a generalization which must be revised in light of recent trends in scholarship, the most important of which is the recognition that fourth-century evidence for grain shipments from the Pontus to Greece cannot necessarily be taken as true also of the fifth.

Byzantium was probably among the original members of the League. Chalcedon too is cited as a founding member of the League by the editors of the *ATL*, though we have no direct evidence that it belonged to the League until 452.[60] The date at which Byzantium began to contribute money is not known, but it had begun, at the latest, by the time the treasury was moved from Delos to Athens in 454/3, and the lists begin. It appears in the lists in 454/3 and 452/1, both restored (454/3 was an assessment year, and reassessments took place every four years). From 443/2 it paid 15T 4300D, which had risen by 430/29 to a height of 21T 4740D. It may have been assessed in 425/4, though the entry is restored; if so, it must have been higher still.[61] The following are Byzantium's attested tribute levels:

454/3	[15T] (*IG* I³ 259.III.7)
452/1	[15T] (*IG* I³ 261.V.29)
450/49	15T (*IG* I³ 263.V.16)
448/7	. . . and 240D (*IG* I³ 264.IV.22)
447/6	[—] (*IG* I³ 265.I.79)
	4T 4800D (*IG* I³ 265.I.103)
	3T 5840D (*IG* I³ 265.I.104)
444/3	[-]
443/2	15T 4300D (*IG* I³ 269.II.26)
442/1	15T 4300D (*IG* I³ 270.II.22)

[59] *RE* III s.v. Byzantion col. 1130 (Kubitschek: 'The high level of tribute attests to the rapid development and prosperity of the city', transl. mine); Merle (1916) 17–21; Miltner (1935) 10; Newskaja (1955) 77–87, esp. 77 and 85; Isaac (1986) 225. For more recent interpretations of the lists and their significance to Byzantium, see Gabrielsen (2007) 290–1 and Archibald (2013) 242.

[60] *ATL* III, 206.

[61] *IG* I³ 71.21–3; cf. Merle (1916) 19 for the start of the tribute.

441/0	[15T 460D] (*IG* I^3 271.I.37)
	Revolt: Thuc. 1.115.5
440/39	Recovered: Thuc. 1.117.3
435/4	[—]
433/2	18T 1800D (*IG* I^3 279.II.32)
430/29	21T 4740D (*IG* I^3 281.III.18)
	[855D] (*IG* I^3 281.III.49)
429/8	[13T 300D] (*IG* I^3 282.A.III.59)
	[10T] 6T 90D (*IG* I^3 282.B.I.5).
428/7	[20T 1170D] (*IG* I^3 283.IV.39)
425/4	Possibly assessed (*IG* I^3 71.II.175?)
411	Revolt: Thuc. 8.80.3; cf. Diod. 13.34.2
408/7	Recovered: Xen. *Hell.* 1.3.20–2.[62]

An increase of three talents is observable after the Samian revolt in 440, when the tribute increased from 15T to 18T. Whether or not this was intended as a punishment for the revolt is unclear, because the tribute continues to increase for the rest of the fifth century.[63] Byzantium's double appearance in 447/6 is probably to be explained as the payment of arrears, that is, outstanding amounts owed from previous years, because this was the last year of a four-year assessment period beginning in 450. If Byzantium was unable to pay in earlier years because of economic difficulties or political events is unknown. In 430/29, 855D was taken to cover the expenses of operations in the Hellespontine district.[64]

This tribute cannot be understood in isolation, and should be compared with the payments of other cities in the Hellespontine district.[65] On first glance, Byzantium's remarkably high level of tribute offers a valuable indicator of the economic prosperity of the city, attesting rapid economic development in this period deriving from the trade between Greece and the Black Sea passing through the strait and the city. In the Hellespontine district, this tribute was exceeded only between 454 and 451 by 'the Cherronesitai' before the appearance of 'the Cherronesitai from Agora', a community incorporating

[62] The figures on the inscriptions are the one sixtieth given as the first fruits to Athena (1 mina to the talent), and they have converted into talents for this table.

[63] Cf. Busolt (1882) 694–5. It is possible, also, that the decrease of Chalcedon's tribute from 9T to 6T between 440 and 436 was intended to reward its loyalty.

[64] Loukopoulou and Łajtar, *IACP*, no. 674, p. 916; cf. Newskaja (1955) 81–2.

[65] Figures cited are taken from Meiggs (1972) Appendix 14.

multiple *poleis* rather than a single *polis*. Only a few *cities* in the district paid anything approaching Byzantium's tribute. Lampsacus alone exceeded 10T, reaching 12T, while Perinthus reached 10T. No individual city in the district exceeded Byzantium's tribute, while across the whole empire only Aegina and Thasos, the two 30T contributors, paid consistently more than Byzantium. Several other cities in the district paid modest sums. On a few occasions Tenedos paid just over 4T, while Abydos would reach 5T. Selymbria kept up a steady 6T, Cyzicus' payments would reach 9T, while Chalcedon paid 7½T in 452/1, rising to 9T between 448/7 and 439/8 before dropping off to 6T then 5T 5100D by 429/8. A handful of other *poleis* occasionally paid one talent. These apart, the other twenty-nine communities in the district always paid under a talent.

One anomaly which arises from these figures is Byzantium's lack of autonomous coinage during the fifth century. Byzantium did not begin minting until the late fifth century, when it began to emit a series of silver and bronze issues on the light 'Persic' and then the Chian (formerly known as the 'Rhodian') weight-standards, carrying the ox-dolphin types discussed in Chapter 1.[66] Byzantium, judged on the basis of the tribute lists, was one of the wealthiest members of the League, and its lack of coinage is difficult to explain. Figueira has shown that, alongside natural resources, tribute payments were also directly correlated with autonomous minting: no other *polis* which failed to mint before the Sicilian expedition exceeded payments of 3T; only Byzantium stands apart, paying over 21T at its height.[67] Nor was lack of coinage normal at the Bosporus: Chalcedon began to mint in the early fifth century. Its absence has generated various explanations. Byzantium must have used Cyzican electron staters in this period, so that an absence of coins does not show an absence of trade or commerce, but reveals that the Byzantines' main trade interests were at this time in the northern Pontus, where Cyzican staters were widespread.[68] Byzantium's famous iron coinage, Figueira notes, may also have acted

[66] Schönert-Geiss I, p. 3 with n. 1, pp. 35–54 dates the first coins to 411, after Byzantium's revolt, whereas Le Rider (1971) 143–53 prefers an early fourth-century date; cf. Figueira (1998) 58–9. The new attribution of the famous *ΣΥΝ* coins to 404 (cf. Chapter 6.1, p. 221 n. 70) shows that the Byzantine type was familiar already in the late fifth century, lending support to Schönert-Geiss' chronology.

[67] Figueira (1998) 52–3, 61.

[68] Schönert-Geiss I, pp. 3 with n. 1, and pp. 35–54. Newskaja (1955) 51 gives a similar explanation: Cyzicus' electron staters were so widespread in the Propontis as

as a local currency in place of silver.[69] No specimens of this iron coinage survive, however, and it is entirely possible that the inference of iron coins at Byzantium derives from the misunderstanding of an Aristophanic joke.[70]

Empire-wide, Byzantium, at a height of 21T, was therefore among the top five 'spenders' of the entire empire, ranking with Aegina (30T), Thasos (30T), Abdera (15T), and Paros (18T). How was this high tribute calculated, and does it reflect the city's economic dominance of the Bosporus? First, we must establish what the tribute was *not* connected to. It is no longer possible to attribute Byzantium's tribute primarily to the developing importance of the grain train between Athens and the Black Sea, although trade between Greece and the Black Sea must have been a contributory factor. For a long time it was assumed that conditions in the fifth century were largely similar to those in the fourth, and that fourth-century evidence for grain shipments from the kingdom of the Bosporus in the Crimea to Athens could be read into the fifth. De Ste. Croix provides the clearest statement of this old orthodoxy, arguing that the Athenian policy of naval imperialism in the fifth century was intrinsically bound up with her requirement to feed a large population with imported grain. Athens, unable to feed her own population from home-grown produce, instead required regular, large-scale imports of grain to supplement local production, a requirement which 'led almost inevitably to a policy of naval imperialism'.[71] If this view is correct, then this was the reason the final stages of the Peloponnesian War revolved around the Hellespont and Bosporus, when Clearchus was sent north by Agis and later when Lysandros attempted to starve Athens into submission. It would also explain Byzantium's tribute, as the reshipment point of all grain passing south from the Pontus.

However, re-examinations of the issue of Pontic grain by Moreno have suggested that while Athens may never have been self-sufficient (as Garnsey suggested), but had in the fifth century regularly to import

to constitute a monopoly. This does not explain why other cities in the Propontis minted at an earlier date. For the prominence of electron in the Propontis, note the hoard of electron Cyzicenes and Lampsacenes found at Apameia-Myrlea: *IGCH* 1234 (*c.*460 BC), with Figueira (1998) 30.

[69] Figueira (1998) 62. For Byzantium's iron coinage: Ar. *Nub.* 249 et schol., Hsch. s.v. *σιδάρεοι*, Aristid. *Or.* 46, 145.15, Pollux 7.105, 9.78 and Schönert-Geiss I, p. 3 n. 2.

[70] Cf. the elegant suggestion of Crawford (1982).

[71] De Ste. Croix (1972) 46–9, at 46; cf. Isager and Hansen (1975) 11–29.

over half of her yearly grain requirements, she was able to do this through the exploitation of overseas grain via her network of cleruchies, especially Euboea, a policy which went hand-in-hand with democratic ideology (so Moreno). Supplies of grain from the Cimmerian Bosporus in the Crimea did not begin on a large scale until *after* the Peloponnesian War, and are not attested until the closing stages of the war, when King Agis observed the grain shipments sailing into Peiraieus and sent Clearchus north to Byzantium to cut the supply off. Before this, grain came to Athens from cleruchies on Euboea, Lemnos, Imbros, and Scyros, where grain was grown locally. It was not until the fourth century that a regular supply of grain from the Crimean Bosporus was secured by a network of *xenia* connections between Athenian politicians and the kings/nobles of the Crimea; relationships which came to dominate Athenian political life in the fourth century.[72]

The question, Braund notes, is not whether Pontic grain was imported to Greece at all during the fifth century, but whether it was on a regular and substantial basis. The silence in the sources about grain headed for Athens until the closing stages of the Peloponnesian War is deafening, but we cannot exclude substantial grain trade between the Pontus and the rest of Greece.[73] The grain ships encountered by Xerxes in the early fifth century were headed for Aegina and the Peloponnese, not Athens, and the ships captured earlier by Histiaeus are not called grain ships but Ionian 'merchant ships'; there is no mention of grain in relation to Pericles' enigmatic Pontic expedition, and the Old Oligarch does not mention Pontic grain, though he does claim that Athens could get whatever luxury items she desired from the Pontus.[74] Our only explicit evidence for Pontic grain is found in the Methone and Aphytis decrees (discussed in Chapter 2.3),

[72] Garnsey (1988) 107–33, also (1985) for the minimalist view; cf. Whitby (1998) and Keen (2000) for responses to this view. Moreno (2007a), these conclusions at 309–24; for the impact of this relationship on Athenian politics, cf. Moreno (2007b) and (2007a) 175–208.

[73] Braund (2007) 39, 42. What evidence exists for the fifth century is conveniently set out by Braund (2007), whose argument I follow in this section; cf. Tsetskhladze (1998) 87: 'Thus, there is no strong and undisputed evidence for the grain trade between Athens and the Black Sea in the fifth century BC . . . The whole edifice of the discussion has been constructed on foundations of uncertain evidence, with ever more rickety floors added to the building'.

[74] For these examples, see Braund (2007) 43–4. Hdt. 7.147; Plut. *Per.* 37; [Xen.] *Ath. Pol.* 2.7. Cf. Moreno (2007a) 161 (Xerxes), 164–5 (Pericles), and Braund (2005) on Pericles' Pontic expedition.

and in the revolt of Mytilene in 428/7; but in no case is the grain envisaged as heading for Athens. Nicias, speaking in the Sicilian debate, does claim that the Syracusans possess an advantage over the Athenians in that they grow their own corn rather than importing it; yet here, again, no mention is made of Pontic grain.[75] It is not until the occupation of Decelea in 413 that we hear of food crisis in Athens; and from this stage onward much of the war was fought around the Hellespont and Bosporus.[76] Clearchus, we have seen, was sent to Byzantium and Chalcedon to cut off Athens' remaining food sources; but, as Braund notes, it took the further, final blockade of Peiraieus to starve Athens into submission, suggesting that food supplies were coming in from elsewhere than the Black Sea.

As a consequence, we cannot assume that Byzantium's high tribute levels can be *solely* attributed to the amount of grain passing through the Bosporus en route to Athens, though it must have been a contributing factor, and so, certainly, would grain headed for places other than Athens, which is even harder to quantify. On the other hand, the development of the fourth-century grain trade with Athens *is* the context in which we should place Byzantium's renewed friendship with Athens in the early fourth century: as an essential waypoint in the supply of corn from the Bosporan kingdom in the northern Black Sea to Athens. Byzantium swore to a separate treaty with Athens before the establishment of the Second Athenian Confederacy; along with Chios it was among the first states to respond to the Athenians' call for an alliance.[77] The city was then among the first to join the Second Athenian Confederacy; its name inscribed in the hand of the original engraver.[78] It is likely that the enthusiasm of the Byzantines to renew their earlier relationship with Athens, despite the Athenians' oppressive fifth-century conduct, was motivated by a desire to cement newly established or re-established trading contacts, by-products of Athens' relationship with the Crimean kings and nobles, and upon which the regional economy had come to depend.

What, then, of the fifth-century tribute? In an influential article, Lucia Nixon and Simon Price examined the various ways in which tribute might have been calculated, arguing that the natural resources available to each city was the determining factor, and that Athens

[75] Thuc. 6.20.4. [76] See Braund (2007) 51–2, 54; Thuc. 7.28.1.
[77] Diod. 15.28.3; cf. Isoc. 14.28. Byzantium's alliance: *IG* II^2 41.
[78] *IG* II^2 43.

adapted tribute assessments to local circumstances. As they show, the tribute cannot have been directly proportionate to population, size of territory, military forces, or any other quantifiable determinant, because the range of payments is too large: only five *poleis* paid 15 or more talents, nineteen paid between 6 and 14 talents, and twenty-nine between 1½ and 5 talents. The remainder, 145, paid a single talent or less. That is, the Athenian Empire was bottom-heavy, comprised of a large majority of minor contributors, so any direct equation with population or territory size could only work if those at the top of this hierarchy were all anomalies. Instead, Nixon and Price examined the local resources of several of the biggest spenders, including Byzantium. Their idea of 'resources' is a more flexible concept, for instead of a rigid correspondence with population or territory size, it allows for Athens to have adapted tribute assessments according to various different criteria: land (its productivity rather than simply its size), population, military strength, the value of harbour dues, and any other factor which Athens perceived as relevant.[79] On this model, the big spenders share several common features: they tended, with the exception of Byzantium, to mint autonomously from an early stage, and many of them possessed valuable resources in their territory. Thasos enjoyed excellent trade routes, possessed wine and vinegar, as well as its famous mines, giving it access to precious metals; Ceos, also a big spender (but a third of the size of Thasos), and which included four *poleis* assessed together, was an important source of red ochre (*miltos*), used in boat-building.[80] Byzantium fits the pattern: its fishing industries were famous in antiquity, and they could be leased out by the state to raise funds.[81] Such resources may well have contributed to the initial high levels of Byzantium's tribute, yet they cannot be used to explain increases in payments. Physical resources would not have changed (much) over a relatively short period of time, and increasing payments must be connected with either a burgeoning economy or progressively more oppressive treatment on the part of Athens.

In one respect, Byzantium's tribute can be viewed as a proportion of the amount of trade being transacted at the Bosporus. Thucydides

[79] Nixon and Price (1990) 140–51.

[80] The evidence is set out in Nixon and Price (1990) 152–5. For the mines of Thasos, cf. Hdt. 6.46. Compare the harbour of Aegina, the other 30T payer: Hdt. 9.80.

[81] Cf. Chapter 4.

says that in 413, under pressure of failing revenues (*prosodoi*), the Athenians imposed instead of (ἀντὶ) the standard *phoros*, a 5 per cent duty on everything their allies imported by land and sea. The important phrase is πλείω νομίζοντες ἂν σφίσι χρήματα οὕτω προσιέναι, 'considering that this would bring them more money'.[82] It is impossible to know whether this new tax did in fact bring in a greater amount than the tribute, but it would be counter-intuitive for the Athenians to take such a measure unless the harbour tax at least equalled the total amount of tribute.[83] Presumably, the Athenians would have farmed the *eikoste* out to local tax collectors, selling it for a price based on previous assessments in order to ensure that it brought in greater revenue than the *phoros*. This new tax suggests that the tribute assessments were based not, at least not exclusively, on the productivity of the *chorai* of the allies and the possession of valuable resources, but on local indirect taxes which already existed, including harbour dues. This would have facilitated the transition from the *phoros* to the tax, since the infrastructure for harbour dues already existed in most *poleis*. If so, then the tribute was based, at least partly, on the amount of international trade transacted in local harbours.[84] Virtually all the bigger spenders were coastal cities anyway, and the productivity of a city's *chora* seems therefore to have counted less than maritime taxes in assessments. Athens, as Kallet notes, could afford by this measure to renounce any tax on inland cities without a coastal emporion.[85] This argument explains why the biggest spenders of the Hellespontine district are all located along important sea routes, because cities on maritime routes would already have derived revenue from their own harbour dues. If so, then Byzantium's high tribute was directly correlated with the large fleets of ships passing through the strait and spending time (and money) in local harbours. As such, it is possible to accept Byzantium's tribute levels as indicators of the developing importance of trade (not just in grain) between Greece and the Black Sea during the fifth century.

[82] Thuc. 7.28.4.

[83] Kallet (2001) 137–9 argues that Thucydides' language of negation (conjuring up the *phoros* before mention of the *eikoste*) should be taken as a censure: on Thucydides' view, the decision was not taken rationally, but was a spontaneous response to an emergency situation which allowed Athens to continue to overextend. Thucydides at least seems to have seen the measure as a failure; though perhaps not in purely financial terms.

[84] So Figueira (2005) 93 and n. 38.

[85] Kallet (2001) 200–3.

There is yet another explanation. Athens must have assessed cities according to their ability to pay. If Athens set 18T tribute, it was confident that Byzantium possessed the economic capability to pay this. This does not necessitate that Byzantium *alone* or without assistance would have been able to pay, despite the existence of valuable resources in the area. That ability, Vincent Gabrielsen has argued, was created and sustained by Athens herself, who deliberately transformed Byzantium into an entrepôt where grain and other commodities from the Black Sea could bulk before being re-exported, under Athenian supervision, to other places—'Athens, in short, was fattening Byzantium by boosting its role in trade, not least in the grain trade.'[86] A comparison with the Chersonese is appropriate here, since that was the only other area in the region which paid tribute on a level with Byzantium's, and which served, as the European side of the Dardanelles, as a counterpart to the Bosporus at the southern entrance to the Hellespontine district. The Chersonese paid 18T in the first period, 454–1.[87] From 444/3, however, this tribute drops off, and is reduced to 1T by 442/1.[88] In the next year *αἰ Χερρονησῖται ἀπ' Ἀγορᾶς* appear, replacing *αἰ Χερρονησῖται*.[89] Up until this point, 'the Cherronesitai' was one of the only communities of the Chersonese peninsula to pay (Alopeconnesus appears too), yet simultaneously with the change, various other individual cities on the Chersonese appear in the lists, paying small amounts always under a talent: Limnai in the Chersonese, Elaious in the Chersonese, Madytos, and Sestos.[90] The change is contemporary with a group of Athenian settlers brought to the area by Pericles, and it reflects a forced *dioikismos* of the Chersonesite state established by Miltiades Senior: either the *synteleia* was divided up in order to provide land for the new cleruchs, or as compensation for the cleruchy the Chersonesites were granted a sizeable reduction in tribute.[91] That the only way for

[86] Gabrielsen (2007) 291–2. The evidence for his claim is considered in Chapter 2.3. If the argument of Chapter 3 is correct, then the Ptolemies were doing something similar in the third century.

[87] *IG* I³ 259.II.28; 260.X.6.

[88] *IG* I³ 270.II.13.

[89] *IG* I³ 271.I.37; 282.III.51–3, I.14 (429/8); 287.II.27–8 (418/17).

[90] *ATL* I, 564.

[91] See Berve (1937) 19–20. The expedition is mentioned in Plut. *Per.* 19, and may be dated from an Athenian casualty list of (?) 447 BC, which preserves evidence of fighting *ἐγ Χερρονέσοι* and *ἐμ Βυζαντίοι* (*IG* I³ 1162). ML p. 128 connect the inscription to this Athenian settlement at the Chersonese, arguing that fighting at Byzantium need not mean in the city itself, but against its Thracian neighbours.

the whole of the Chersonese to afford 18T tribute was for it to be taxed as a region is noteworthy, for something similar could easily have fuelled the high payments of Byzantium—that is, by centralizing control of the strait at Byzantium, as Gabrielsen suggests, Athens was able to tax both the city with its dependencies and extended *chora* as one payer.

A parallel to the artificial breaking-up of the Chersonesite *synteleia* is apparent at Byzantium. Until 433/2, it is usually assumed that two of Byzantium's dependencies, Callipolis and Bysbikos, were assessed as part of Byzantium's overall tribute. Callipolis is not the more famous Callipolis on the Dardanelles, Gallipoli, but located in Mysia, tentatively identifiable with a place mentioned by Ps.-Scylax near Kios.[92] Bysbikos was in the same area, an island in the southern Propontis off the mouth of the river Rhyndacus.[93] Both dependencies are in precisely the area which Byzantium would later control in the period when it built up its own overseas possessions.[94] Both first appear in 433/2, paying insignificant amounts: Callipolis 1000D, Bysbikos 3000D. Neither appears before this date, but it is possible they were first assessed in an earlier year. Byzantium, as we have seen, revolted in 440 and was swiftly subdued. It is easy to imagine that Athens no longer trusted the city with control of this region, the approach to the Bosporus from the southern Propontis, and took that control away from Byzantium by taxing these communities separately, thereby effectively creating independent communities in this area.[95] The possibility demonstrates the capability and willingness on the part of the Athenians to artificially manipulate the status of communities within their empire for reasons of expediency. In this instance, political disaggregation was utilized to weaken a potentially dangerous recalcitrant ally. A similar case, the Eteocarpathioi, is discussed by John Ma.[96] While it suited the Athenians, they therefore preferred to assess Byzantium along with its dependencies and territory as one single payer. By doing so, they empowered Byzantium to collect taxes from the surrounding region, thus reinforcing the dominance of the *astu* over its extended *chora* and overseas dependencies,

[92] Ps.-Scylax 93; for identification: *ATL* I, 494–5.
[93] Also mentioned by Ps.-Scylax 94; cf. *ATL* I, 476–7.
[94] Cf. Chapter 3.3.
[95] Suggested originally by Busolt (1882) 694; cf. Merle (1916) 21 n. 4.
[96] Ma (2009). He argues that the community was detached from the territories of Carpathus, Arkasseia and Brylous, as part of a 'strategically fostered local segmentation' (at p. 135).

and encouraging the regional associations which were discussed in the last chapter (and which may owe their origins to this period). After the revolt, they felt compelled to break up this *synteleia* in order to maintain closer control of essential naval routes. The Athenians thus declared by imperial fiat that the communities in Mysia, which were later incorporated fully into Byzantium's *chora*, its *peraea*, and which would later share its eponymous magistrate and system of civic subdivisions, now possessed the status of individual *poleis*, and that they be taxed as such, whereas previously they did not. If true, then Athens was indeed 'fattening' Byzantium by taxing the Bosporus and Byzantium's Propontic dependencies at the city itself.

2.3 THE ATHENIAN EMPIRE: FINANCIAL BENEFACTOR OR RACKETEER?

The Athenians' naval dominance permitted them to close the route through the Bosporus in order to prevent supplies reaching their enemies or allies in revolt. In 428/7, the Mytileneans waited for the arrival of archers, corn, and other items from the Pontus before revolting, presumably because Athens could have prevented these supplies from reaching Lesbos once the island was in revolt.[97] The Old Oligarch likewise claims that Athens, a sea power, could rule mainland cities by threatening to prevent imports and exports.[98] A key aspect of Athens' thalassocracy was that it could interfere in allied trade and ensure that requisite supplies were sold in the Athenian market. The Bosporus, one of two choke-points on the route to the Black Sea, was a convenient location at which to regulate Pontic imports.

But how did the Athenians maintain control of the Bosporus? What institutional mechanisms offer evidence of Gabrielsen's view that the Athenians had transformed Byzantium into an entrepôt, and does the evidence permit us to imagine such a high level of imperial involvement at the strait? There are several pieces of evidence that Athens took a special interest in the taxation of the strait. Individually, they illustrate that a unique significance was attached to the Bosporus; together, they come close to providing evidence for

[97] Thuc. 3.2. [98] [Xen.] *Ath. Pol.* 2.3, 11–12.

something approaching an imperial 'bureaucracy'. Talk of a bureaucracy might push the point too far: at a minimum, the Athenian measures were opportunistic efforts to exploit the strait in the same way that Histiaeus had done and that Philip would do, monopolizing the use of force in the region in an effort to extract taxes or tolls from passing fleets. They illustrate the kinds of things which an imperial power would naturally seek to do when in control of an asset like the Bosporus, and provided important precedents for the arrangements established at the strait in the following centuries (cf. Chapter 3). Perhaps, in a piecemeal fashion, the Athenians started with a relatively basic operation on the Histiaeus model, following their expulsion of Pausanias, and over time built up different levels of control to better exploit the passing fleets as their needs changed. The nature of the evidence is such that we cannot know when Athenian control of the Bosporus originated, or how formal this was at different periods in time, but offers tantalizing glimpses of what the Athenians sought to gain from the strait and how they implemented this.

The first piece of evidence that the Athenians were attempting to exploit the strait in a systematic way is the toll on shipping administered by Athens at the Bosporus in the fifth century. In 409, we are told, Alcibiades set up a toll station at Chrysopolis, at which he charged a *dekate*, a 10 per cent toll, on ships sailing *out of* the Pontus. Polybius, speaking of both a third-century toll and the toll levied by Alcibiades, says that this was levied on ships sailing *into* the Pontus.[99] Chrysopolis, we have seen, was the penultimate elbow of the Bosporus before Byzantium, where the currents in the strait forced ships to skirt close to the headlands, making the site a perfect location at which to impose a toll. According to Dionysius, it was also the earlier site of a Persian tax-collecting station.[100] The context of the establishment of this toll station is the wake of Byzantium's revolt in 411, when it went over to Sparta along with various other cities during the Ionian War,

[99] Xen. *Hell.* 1.1.22; Diod. 13.64.2–3; cf. Pol. 3.2.5, 4.52.5 (a *dekate* levied in the third century during the war with Rhodes), and 4.44.4–5 (referring to the toll levied by Alcibiades). Possibly, the two are synonyms, and both tolls were levied on shipping sailing into and out of the Black Sea, as accepted by Walbank, *HCP* I, 497–8 and Gabrielsen (2007) 293. Perhaps another explanation is that in Polybius' day the Pontus was no longer principally an exporter: Rubel (2001) 41 n. 9. On the toll, see also Rubel (2009) 339, and Krentz (1989) 100.

[100] Dion. Byz. 109.

at Athens' lowest ebb.[101] This illustrates that possession of Byzantium was not in itself enough to control the strait, for though the Spartans possessed the city, they could not prevent the Athenians, who ruled the sea, from simply sailing past (despite the currents) and fortifying Chrysopolis themselves.

As Gabrielsen argues, the fact that the establishment of a toll at Chrysopolis came in the wake of Byzantium's revolt heavily implies that Athens already possessed a toll station at Byzantium itself—if their first action in the area after the loss of Byzantium was to establish a toll station at Chrysopolis, it stands to reason that this was intended to replace one that they had recently lost.[102] Later, in 389, it was re-established *at Byzantium* by Thrasybulus, and was farmed out to Byzantines, suggesting that this was the preferred location under ideal circumstances.[103] If this is correct, then in 408, when democratic partisans within Byzantium betrayed the city to Athens, it is therefore likely that on its return to the Delian League the toll station was moved from Chrysopolis back to Byzantium. However, the city did not remain in the possession of Athens for long after the city was betrayed to Alcibiades in 408, and when the city changed hands again at the end of the Peloponnesian War, we can once more assume that the toll station at Byzantium was taken over by Sparta.[104] This toll was therefore one of the reasons that the final stages of the Peloponnesian War revolved around the Bosporus, as the Spartans and Athenians each in their turn attempted to claim it for themselves—control of the toll brought with it control of Pontic trade, crucial to any blockade of Athens' corn supply, and was a lucrative source of revenue once sold out to local tax farmers. Accordingly, following the battle of Aegospotami in 405, Lysandros immediately moved north to the Bosporus, where Byzantium and Chalcedon voluntarily went over to Sparta without resistance.[105] Before leaving,

[101] Thuc. 8.80.3; Diod. 13.34.2.

[102] Gabrielsen (2007) 293–5.

[103] Xen. *Hell.* 4.8.27; Dem. 20.60. This point is made by Rubel (2001) 46.

[104] On Byzantium changing hands between Sparta and Athens at the end of the Peloponnesian War, see Merle (1916) 26–31, Isaac (1986) 227–8, and Gabrielsen (2007) 294, who argues that it is likely that both Athens and Sparta were levying the toll simultaneously in these years.

[105] Xen. *Hell.* 2.2.1–2; cf. Dem. 20.60. On Lysandros' tenure at Byzantium, see Merle (1916) 32. Lysandros allowed the garrison to leave for Athens (hoping to exacerbate the starvation caused by the Spartan naval blockade), and allowed the democratic partisans who had betrayed the city in 408 to return to Athens, where they received citizenship. Revealingly, Xenophon notes that they visited the Pontus before

Lysandros placed the city in the hands of a harmost, Sthenelaus, and altered the constitution to an oligarchy.[106] Clearchus' second reign of terror followed.

There is no clear *terminus post quem* for the original creation of the *dekate*.[107] The first decree of Callias, from the late 430s, details expenditure from a fund in Athens set up 'from the *dekate* when it had been sold'.[108] We know from Thrasybulus' actions that the *dekate* at Byzantium was in the fourth century normally sold out to individual local tax farmers, and it may be that this is the *dekate* referred to by the decree.[109] The only difficulty with this interpretation is that 10 per cent is an unusually high charge for access to the Black Sea, and has been viewed as an emergency measure connected to Athens' desperate situation at the end of the war.[110] However, as we shall see in a moment, it is not necessary to assume that the *dekate* was a simple transit tax, and so nothing precludes its imposition during peace time. It is highly likely that, as Gabrielsen argues, after the secession of Byzantium the Spartans took over a pre-existing Athenian *dekate*.[111] When Alcibiades re-established it at Chrysopolis both powers were therefore levying the toll simultaneously and in competition, each of them exploiting a different Bosporus elbow.

The second Methone Decree provides further evidence of Athenian involvement in the strait. The decree permits Athens' ally Methone in Macedon to import a set amount of *medimnoi* of corn (the

coming to Athens. Perhaps they cultivated networks of *xenia* with the Spartocid King Satyrus of the Bosporus; connections which would later become part of the mutual relationship between Athens and the Bosporus in the following century.

[106] Xen. *Hell.* 2.2.2. We only know of the constitutional change from later events. In 389 when Thrasybulus won back the city, we are told that he *μέτέστησε δὲ ὀλιγαρχίας εἰς τὸ δημοκρατείσθαι τοὺς Βυζαντίους* (Xen. *Hell.* 4.8.27).

[107] Merle (1916) 22–3, 28 dates the establishment of the toll to 436, in connection with Pericles' Pontic expedition (Plut. *Per.* 20), but, as Gabrielsen notes, there is no direct evidence to support the hypothesis; Gabrielsen (2007) 319 n. 21.

[108] *IG* I³ 52.7: *τὰ ἐκ τες δεκάτες ἐπειδὰν πραθεῖ.*

[109] The connection between the two *dekatai* was suggested by Mattingly (1964) 45–6, and accepted by Gabrielsen (2007) 293–4.

[110] *RE* III s.v. Byzantion col. 1131, ML p. 161. Rubel (2001) 40, 49 and (2009) 339 sees 10 per cent as an abnormally high level of taxation, but believes that some lower tax was being demanded earlier in the century. A flaw in this line of reasoning is that an emergency measure would not be re-established in the fourth century, as Rübel (2001) 46 notes. It is also worth remembering, with Finley (1978) 119, that 'very few years since 478 were not "wartime years"'.

[111] Gabrielsen (2007) 294; Rubel (2001) 40–2 also believes that the toll existed prior to Alcibiades' visit to Chrysopolis.

number is not clear, but is a multiple of 1,000), from Byzantium, the import to be watched over by Athenian officials, the 'Hellespont Guards' (*Hellespontophylakes*), who may have been stationed at Byzantium itself.

> *[Μεθοναίοις] εἶ[ναι ἐχ]σα[γο]γὲν ἐγ Βυζαντίο σίτο μέχ[ρι.... ακισχ]ιλίον μεδίμνον το ἐνιαυτο ἑκάστο,* hοι *[δὲ ἑλλεσπ]οντοφύλακες μέτε αὐτοὶ κολυόντον ἐχσάγεν μ[έτε ἄλ[λον ἐόντον κολύεν, ἒ εὐθυνέσθον μυρίαισι δρ[αχμεῖσ]ιν ἕκαστος· γραφσαμένος δὲ πρὸς τὸς ἑλλεσπ [οντο]φύλακας ἐχσάγε[ν] μεχρὶ το τεταγμένο· ἀζέμιος [δὲ ἔσ]το καὶ ἑ ναῦς ἑ ἐχσάγοσα*
>
> The Methonians shall be permitted to import grain from Byzantium up to the amount of [. . .] thousand medimnoi each year. The Hellespontophylakes shall not themselves prevent them from exporting it or allow anyone else to prevent them, or (if they do) they are to be liable to a fine of ten thousand drachms each. After giving notices to the Hellespontine guards they shall export up to the permitted amount. *Exemption* shall also apply to the ship carrying it.[112]

Precisely these same privileges were granted to Athens' ally Aphytis.[113] The Methone Decree provides tantalizing evidence that the Athenians were doing something more at Byzantium than opportunistically extorting passing ships on the Histiaeus model, but that they were somehow using Byzantium and the Bosporus to control who could import what from the Black Sea. They were not merely profiting from passing trade; they were using the Bosporus to *control* trade, utilizing their possession of Byzantium and the strait to reward loyal allies and harm their enemies. Nothing explicit connects the Methone Decree to the *dekate*, but it is possible that the Hellespont Guards, who permit Methone to import from Byzantium, were the same officials who implemented the *dekate* at Byzantium. If we do connect the mechanisms outlined in the decree with the *dekate*, then it also helps to push back the date of the *dekate* to give a possible *terminus ante quem* of 426–4, but still no clear date for its first establishment. Rubel, arguing justifiably that the toll at Chrysopolis was *not* an emergency measure, and that the Athenians would have been foolish not to erect the toll at an earlier stage (given that they were in control of the strait from the

[112] *IG* I^3 61.34–41 (transl. Fornara, no. 122). For the historical context, cf. Mattingly (1961) and Meiggs (1972) 534–6.

[113] *IG* I^3 62–3, permitting Aphytis to import a set amount of grain *καθάπερ Μεθωναίοις*.

470s), suggests a date of *c.*454 (i.e. the transfer of the treasury from Delos to Athens), before the Peloponnesian War, and argues that the Hellespont Guards at Byzantium were responsible for extracting the 10 per cent toll.[114] If we were to push these two pieces of evidence as far as we can, they would provide us with the institutional trappings required for Athens to have turned Byzantium into an entrepôt: the Hellespont Guards would have been in charge of making sure that nobody obstructed shipments, ensured that no competitors in the area tried to levy their own toll, prevented Athens' enemies from importing from Byzantium, and fined those who imported without permission. Simultaneously, to facilitate this arrangement, Athens must have built up cereal trading complexes and storage facilities at Byzantium. It is also worth noting that a *written* declaration to the Hellespont Guards was required, just as later a written declaration to the Roman officials at Chalcedon would be necessary, revealing the formalized nature of this Athenian administration.[115] All this comes very close to an imperial bureaucracy. Although it is not clear that Athens' involvement in the strait went quite this far, the evidence sketched so far does show remarkable levels of interest in the strait, and provides examples of the kinds of things pirates, kings, or imperial powers might do when they found themselves in control of the strait. We do not know when these measures were established, but it is possible that they existed in some shape throughout most of the fifth century. Perhaps they originated in a primitive form following the expulsion of Pausanias, simple extortion of passing fleets, but developed with the addition of 'Guards' and special deals with allies like Methone into this more formalized system by the end of the century as the Athenians' situation worsened and their need for new sources of income increased, or as their conduct toward their allies worsened.[116] Certainly, it would seem counter-intuitive for the Athenians *not* to

[114] Rubel (2001) esp. 41–6. Cf. Gabrielsen (2007) 293–4 and 319 n. 21, who also accepts an earlier date, Pébarthe (2000) 55, 62–3, and Krentz (1989) 100.

[115] Pébarthe (2000) 62–3. For the importance of writing in commercial exchange, cf. Bresson (1994), stressing (at 60) that written documentation was a crucial factor in a state's ability to control imports/exports, or to sell out that ability.

[116] Ar. *Vesp.* 235–7 relates to Athenians, now in extreme old age, who once 'stood guard' at Byzantium: *ἠνικ᾽ ἐν Βυζαντίῳ ξυνῆμεν φρουροῦντ᾽ ἐγώ τε καὶ σύ*. Merle (1916) 22 connects this passage to the Samian revolt of 440, but, as Isaac (1986) 226 n. 76 notes, this would defeat the point of the joke: these jurors are comically old, the generation of the Persian Wars. MacDowell (1971) 163 prefers 478, the taking of Byzantium by Pausanias. Also possible is the lower date of 471/0 for Pausanias' expulsion by Cimon.

attempt to exploit the strait following Pausanias' expulsion, given that an immediate precedent for this could be found in Histiaeus.

Assuming that the *dekate* or some similar due was therefore being operated by Athens for a large part of the fifth century, what exactly did the 10 per cent buy? Was such a large toll meant simply to purchase access to and from the Black Sea from the Hellespont Guards? If so, it may become difficult to accept the toll as anything but an emergency measure. A solution has been suggested by Gabrielsen, connected to the ebb and flow of maritime traffic around the Bosporus and Hellespont, discussed in Chapter 1. The *dekate*, he suggests, was meant to purchase Athenian protection from piracy along the route from Hieron at the northern mouth of the Bosporus to the Aegean.[117] Ships' captains, according to this argument, were not merely purchasing passage through the strait, but safe passage guaranteed by the Athenian navy; or, rather, immunity from molestation by any Athenian or privateer ships. On this view, the Hellespont Guards not only granted access to and from the Black Sea; they protected the ships from predators in the strait.

Once again, it is not clear that the evidence allows for such ambitious reconstructions. The Methone Decree, if Gabrielsen's view is right, would have granted to Methone freedom from molestation from pirates (including cities which attempted to seize shipping), and an escort from Byzantium to Methone on payment of a fee, the 10 per cent tax; all this on top of the stationing of Athenian officials with armed guards at Byzantium, the implementation of the required bureaucracy and infrastructure to support Byzantium's role as a bulking point, and a military presence in and around the strait. This is formal, large-scale thalassocracy, in which the Athenians utilize their control of the Bosporus to not only control what and who can enter and exit the Pontus, but also sell a protection service to passing fleets. That all these mechanisms and institutions were intended to create this system of control is not clear. It requires a number of disparate sources to be connected without explicit evidence that they

However, 'guard duty' does not necessitate a siege. The participle φρουροῦντ', 'performing guard duty', could be connected with the Hellespont 'Guards' of the Methone Decree: troops stationed with these officials, who kept guard at Byzantium for any ships passing through the strait and which had not paid the required toll. If so, some of the mechanisms evident from that decree might even be placed as early as the late 470s. Cf. Moreno (2007a) 166, and Gabrielsen (2007) 310.

[117] Gabrielsen (2007) 300–11, esp. 310–11.

belong together (the Hellespont Guards, the deals with individual allies like Methone, the *dekate*), and the assumption of the existence of other institutions (cereal trading complexes, customs houses, etc.). However, taken together, all the individual pieces of evidence about what the Athenians were doing at the Bosporus add up to create a strong impression that something serious was going on: not necessarily 'bureaucracy', but certainly extortion, formal taxation, and possibly the offer of protective services. When placed into their geographical context at the Bosporus, where, we have seen, a variety of different predators were drawn to the strait for the opportunity to extort passing fleets, Athenian interference of this scale does not seem far-fetched. In effect, Athens had succeeded where Histiaeus, Pausanias, and Philip II failed, monopolizing the exercise of organized violence in the Propontis and legitimizing their extortion racket via the imposition of the 10 per cent toll and Athenian officials.

We hear of two Athenian anti-piracy expeditions during the fifth century, albeit in a late source: Cimon expelled pirates from Scyros, while Pericles did so at the Chersonese.[118] Moreover, fifth-century treaties show that Athens demanded of her allies that pirates not be allowed to operate from their harbours: the phrase 'not to receive *leistai* or themselves to act as a *leistes*' appears as a formula in the oaths on Athens' treaties with Mytilene in *c.*427–4 and with Halieis in 424/3.[119] Selling a protection service would mesh perfectly with the anti-piracy stance of the Delian League: the Athenians could brook no other pirates but themselves; they could not tolerate rival powers attempting to levy their own tolls, like the Cyzicenes, Chalcedonians, and Byzantines did in the fourth century. No doubt Athenian protection was depicted as a service provided by the beneficent maritime power. Eumelus of the Bosporan kingdom in 310 could be praised by Diodorus as a protector of the peoples of the Pontus because he waged a war against pirates, earning him the gratitude of the Greek cities dotted around the coasts of the Black Sea.[120] Rhodes, which in the third century took on the responsibility for keeping the sea free of

[118] Plut. *Cim.* 8; *Per.* 19; cf. De Souza (1999) 30.

[119] *IG* I^3 67, 75. Note also *IG* II^2 1623.276–85 for the fourth century. For general treatments of ancient piracy, cf. J.K. Davies, 'Cultural, social and economic features of the Hellenistic world', *CAH* VII^2 1 (1984) 285–90 (on the third century), and De Souza (1999), at 26–36.

[120] Diod. 20.25.2.

pirates, is praised in similar terms.[121] But what happened if ships' captains refused to pay? We should not imagine that their ships were simply let be or denied entrance to the strait. The *dekate* not only bought protection from *other* pirates, it bought assurances that fleets and cities would not be subject to Athenian attacks or plundering expeditions. When Byzantium revolted in 411, taking with it the Athenian *dekate*, the generals in the Hellespont launched a series of plundering expeditions designed to raise funds, extorting, *inter alia*, Cyzicus, the Chersonese, and Selymbria.[122] This form of 'taxation without consent' illustrates how little of a gap could exist between the legitimate and illegitimate exploitation of the Bosporus, especially in wartime circumstances.

Athens' attempts to control and to profit from the Bosporus in the fifth century were long-term and pervasive, lasting for the better part of that century—potentially, the process began the moment Pausanias was expelled, but may have begun in a primitive form before undergoing a number of adaptations as the Athenians experimented with different modes of exploitation. Yet the exploitation of the Bosporus as an economic resource should not be interpreted exclusively from the top-down, imperial perspective, or taken solely as a gauge of the 'oppressive' attitude of the Athenians toward their subjects. As we have seen, the mechanisms which the Athenians imposed upon the Bosporus share affinities with the actions of those individuals who used piracy and extortion in the area to attempt to gain control of a local resource offered by the strait. Most importantly, both Athens and these pirates attempted to extort the passing ships by monopolizing violence in the Propontis. That Athens succeeded in doing so for such a long period of time was because her naval dominance in the Aegean and the Propontis was unmatched. This legitimated the Athenian toll: though fundamentally a form of extortion, because the Delian League had cornered the market in naval violence within the Propontis, it could be depicted as the legitimate taxation of Black Sea trade. Her opponents were consequently stigmatized and delegitimized, as Histiaeus, Pausanias, Clearchus, and Philip were likewise branded tyrants, pirates, and lawbreakers.

[121] Diod. 20.81.3; Strab. 14.2.5. On this see Gabrielsen (2007) 308, where these passages are discussed.

[122] Xen. *Hell.* 1.1.8, 13–15, 19–21; 3.8.

We should not, then, see the Athenians' activities in this region as symptoms of a more general aim to control the sea-lanes of the Aegean and the Mediterranean. That was the natural outcome of possession of a maritime empire, but it was not the explicit objective of the Athenian policy toward the Bosporus. The Athenians' policies should be taken as what they are: sensitive responses to local circumstances; the natural response to control of this region. The Athenians acted oppressively, but no differently than any other power, interested in profit and in control of this region, would have done if permitted. From this perspective the Athenian Empire constitutes merely one chapter in the long history of economic exploitation of the Bosporus. Preceded by Histiaeus and Pausanias, the Athenians were followed by Clearchus and the Spartans, by Philip, and by the Byzantines themselves, as we shall see in the following chapter. When the Romans controlled this region, adding Byzantium to the province of Pontus-Bithynia, they too would levy tolls on shipping at the Bosporus.[123] Many years later, the emperor Justinian would attempt to do the same thing by stationing guards at customs houses along the Bosporus.[124]

In the fourth century, when the Athenians no longer possessed the maritime might which they wielded in the fifth century, the local communities of the strait became free to begin exploiting their situation for themselves, continuing and adapting earlier policies begun by the Athenians. It is to the period following Byzantium's revolt from Athens in 364 that we should date the seizure of Athenian grain ships by the Byzantines, which are mentioned by Apollodorus and which prompted Athens to send out a fleet to convoy the corn ships from Hieron past Byzantium.[125] The act was perhaps a revival of the

[123] The Roman Customs Law of Asia: Cottier et al. (2008) ll. 13–15. Cf. Chapter 3.3.

[124] Procop. *Hist. arc.* 25.1–6.

[125] [Dem.] 50.6, 17–19. That Byzantium revolted in 364/3, and not during the Social War, is suggested by Diod. 15.78.4–79.1, on Epaminondas' expedition to Rhodes, Chios, and Byzantium, which enticed them away from the Second Athenian Confederacy (cf. Isoc. 5.53). Plut. *Phil.* 14.2 explicitly and Isoc. 5.53 implicitly claim that Epaminondas achieved nothing on this voyage, but note a Cnidian proxeny decree for Epaminondas (*SEG* XLIV.901), as well as Justin 16.4.3, who claims that Epaminondas sailed into the Black Sea as far as Heraclea Pontica. For this suggestion, cf. Busolt (1874) 803, Accame (1941) 179, Bury and Meiggs (1975) 546 n. 16, Cargill (1981) 169, Hornblower (1982) 200–1, Jehne (1994) 116, (1999) 338–9, and Hornblower (2011) 262. A tight relationship with the Thebans is suggested by Byzantine contributions to the Boeotian side during the Sacred War in the 350s: *IG*

dekate itself. Furthermore, according to [Aristotle] the Byzantines, in a period of crisis, forced merchants into their harbour, where they paid a 10 per cent tax on the value of goods carried. Again, this can only refer to a revival of the *dekate*.[126] Around this time Byzantium also occupied Chalcedon (a breach of the King's Peace), and annexed Selymbria. By these actions Byzantium became a significant power in its own right, with dependencies on both shores of the Bosporus.[127] These were the first steps toward a network of overseas possessions which Byzantium possessed in the third century, and which permitted the Byzantines to establish the complex controlled currency system discussed in Chapter 3. While all this serves to illustrate that economic exploitation constitutes one of the most important of the historical continuities created by the Bosporus' unique circumstances, it remains to explain how and why the methods utilized to exploit the passing fleets changed over time. In particular, why did the Byzantines and Chalcedonians feel that a 'controlled' currency system was the best way to 'monetize' the Bosporus, whereas the Athenians used traditional taxation in combination with a protection racket?

VIII 2418 (RO 57). The Byzantine *synedroi* of this inscription may belong to a *synedrion* of the Thebans' allies, formed following Epaminondas' 364/3 trip: Lewis (1990), but cf. Buckler (2000).

[126] [Arist.] *Oec.* 1346b 30–5; this passage is discussed in detail in Chapter 3.2.

[127] Dem. 15.26; Theopompus *FGrHist* 115 F 62; Polyaen. *Strat.* 6.25.

3

Common Benefactors of All

> The Greek city did not die at Chaeronea; neither did it die under Alexander, nor during the course of the whole Hellenistic period. Certainly, Athens and Sparta no longer played the same role which these cities were accustomed to play in the Mediterranean—or in the Aegean. But this decline in international power wrought no change whatsoever to the tides of civic life in respect of its activity, its responsibilities, or its dangers . . . Instead we find Rhodes, and even Byzantium, playing in international politics roles which were not inferior to that played by Athens previously.[1]

The history of Hellenistic Byzantium is a vivid illustration of Louis Robert's dictum that the Greek city did not die at Chaeronea.[2] We saw in the previous chapter that when Philip II threatened the Bosporus in 340 BC, a coalition including Athens, motivated by fears about the safety of her Pontic grain route, Rhodes, Chios, Cos, Tenedos, and the Persian King Artaxerxes II came together in support of the cities, and prevented Philip from reaching the strait. This international response parallels the coalition of Cassander, Ptolemy I, Athens, and the Aetolians, which came to the aid of the Rhodians when their city was besieged by Demetrius Poliorcetes in 305/4. Like Rhodes, and as Robert recognized, the independence of Byzantium and the neutrality of the Bosporus possessed international significance. Undoubtedly, the Persian King was afraid of the prospect of Philip gaining control of the strait, which would provide a crossing point for an invasion of the Persian Empire. Moreover, and as we have seen, control of the Bosporus would have allowed Philip to

[1] Robert (1969) 42 (transl. mine).
[2] For Rhodes in this period, cf. Gabrielsen (1997) and (1999).

obstruct supplies of corn from the Crimea to Greece, and prevent his enemies from importing without his authorization—as Athens had done in the fifth century. Opposition to Philip therefore motivated all those who had any interest in the strait remaining open for traders. Instead, the economic importance of the strait meant that the region acted as a protective buffer, as Byzantium preserved free passage through the strait for shipping—one of the best examples that the Greek city did not die after Chaeronea.

The influence wielded by the Byzantines in this period derived from the fact that, unlike during the fifth and fourth centuries, when the strait was the possession of Persia, Sparta, or Athens, in the third century the Byzantines themselves controlled the Bosporus. Fear of a competitor succeeding where Philip had failed caused the Hellenistic monarchs to strive to maintain friendly relations with Byzantium, and to ensure that friendly locals, and not one of their rivals, remained in control of the region, affording the Byzantines the unusual degree of freedom and influence which Robert observed. The subject of this chapter is Byzantium's position in the Hellenistic period. The most extraordinary feature of the city's role in this period is the possible existence of a 'controlled' monetary system at the strait, used by the Byzantines to give local traders preferential treatment, and which forced foreign merchants to give up part of the value of their transactions as an indirect protection tariff. In this chapter, I explore the evidence which has been adduced to demonstrate the existence of this currency system, how it functioned, its historical context, and its significance. I begin by assessing the wider economic function of Byzantium and the Bosporus in the Hellenistic period, exemplified by the war with Rhodes in 220 BC over a transit toll levied by the Byzantines on Pontic trade. I then move on in the following two sections to an exploration of the wider context of the third-century currency system: first, I explore the precedents for financial stratagems at the Bosporus, and the nature of previous attempts to tax Pontic trade; I then examine the policy of territorial aggrandizement carried out by the Byzantines from the middle of the fourth century to the end of the third, which, I suggest, was linked to the establishment of the currency system. These are prerequisites to the final section, where I turn to the operation of the currency system itself and examine the evidence for its existence. The system, it now seems, lasted for a longer period of time than has previously been believed, and appears to have been used throughout this period as a means for

the local cities to profit from trade passing through the Bosporus. Moreover, it involved powers other than the local cities, who involved themselves at the strait in an effort to preserve the region as a safe trading space, free from the interference of rival successor kingdoms. In this sense, it was the successor to the bureaucracy established by the Delian League in the previous century, and provides a vivid illustration of both Robert's claim and of the Bosporus' regional distinctiveness. By exploring this system, it may become possible to more fully understand the nature of other controlled currency systems in antiquity, and the contexts in which they could operate.

3.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: THE RHODIAN-BYZANTINE WAR

Byzantium possessed a close relationship with the early Antigonid kings. In 318, a sea battle took place at the Hellespont between Cleitus, the admiral of Polysperchon, and the fleet under Nicanor, Antigonus I's admiral. Cleitus' intent was to prevent Antigonus crossing into Europe. When Nicanor was defeated, he escaped to Chalcedon; Cleitus to Byzantium's territory. Thus far the Byzantines remained neutral, but they permitted ships to ferry Antigonus and his forces over to Europe, where they fell upon Cleitus' encamped forces and chased them away from the Thracian hinterland.[3] This episode provides a rare example of the city taking sides in the struggles of the successors, and the sympathy shown here to the Antigonids is not isolated: an extant decree discovered in Olympia records the decision of the Byzantines to erect statues in honour of Antigonus Monophthalmos and his son Demetrius Poliorcetes. The corresponding statue bases were discovered near the southern temple of Zeus in Olympia.[4] Their sympathy for the Antigonids did not, however, mean that the

[3] Diod. 18.72 and Polyaen. 4.6.8, with Engel (1973) and Merle (1916) 51.

[4] *IByz* 4–6. Paus. 6.15.7 also refers to statues erected by Byzantium at Olympia in honour of Antigonus Gonatas and his father Demetrius Poliorcetes, perhaps for Gonatas' victory over the Galatians in 276. However, it is likely that Pausanias has mistakenly attributed the statues to the wrong kings: see on this Łajtar, *IByz*, pp. 31–3, with arguments. Another inscription from Athens, dated to 307/6–304/3, honours the Byzantine Asclepiades for his goodwill toward the city and the King: *IG* II^2 555. See Merle (1916) 53 and Newskaja (1955) 146.

Byzantines would condescend to renouncing their independence. In 313 Antigonus was in Thrace moving against Lysimachus, and asked Byzantium to conclude an alliance with him against Lysimachus. The city was simultaneously approached by envoys from Cassander and Lysimachus, and the Byzantines chose to support neither side: they voted 'to remain in tranquility and to guard the peace and friendship they possessed toward both sides'.[5]

During the Hellenistic period, Byzantium exploited this independence to develop relationships with other wealthy Pontic cities like Sinope, Istros, and Tomis, and with the kingdom of the Bosporus in the Crimea, while Byzantine merchants could profit from the new markets which were beginning to open up for Pontic grain passing through the strait.[6] Byzantium's friendship became a prestigious attraction for the Hellenistic monarchs. With Ptolemy II, Antigonus Gonatas, Heraclea, and Cius, all of whom had previously been involved in the anti-Seleucid agitation of the Northern League, Byzantium was made joint guardian of the children of Nicomedes I of Bithynia in his will—a decision which led to a succession war in Bithynia.[7] Similarly, in 315 Byzantium's ally Chalcedon was besieged by Zipoetes I, the king of Bithynia, in retaliation for a plundering expedition into Bithynia. In one tradition, the king granted an armistice to the city as a favour to Byzantium, hoping to gain the friendship and cooperation of the dominant city on the Bosporus.[8]

What lay behind this influential position? Why did Hellenistic monarchs condescend to permit this small, independent city, lying outside the direct sway of any of their kingdoms, to continue to dominate a region so critical to international trade? An episode from 220 BC, narrated in detail by Polybius, may be used to illustrate the wider economic significance of the Bosporus during this century, and offers one possible explanation. This is the period when the

[5] Diod. 19.77.7: *Βυζαντίοις ἔδοξε μένειν ἐφ᾽ ἡσυχίας καὶ τηρεῖν τὴν πρὸς ἀμφοτέρους εἰρήνην ἅμα καὶ φιλίαν*. See Merle (1916) 52 and Newskaja (1955) 146–7.

[6] Diod. 20.25.1: Byzantium's friendship with Eumelus, king of the Bosporus. *ISM* I.65: a decree from Istros recording that city's request for a Byzantine architect to build the city walls, and the subsequent honouring of the Byzantine architect Ephicrates with proxeny. For the grain trade in the Hellenistic world between the Pontus and Greece, cf. Casson (1954) and Oliver (2007) 247–59, with Appendix 7.

[7] Memnon, *FGrHist* 434 F 14.

[8] Plut. *Quaest. Graec.* 49. The other tradition in Diod. 19.60 has Ptolemaios, nephew of Antigonus Monophthalmus, ask Zipoetes to lower the siege.

Byzantines, as described by Polybius, digressing on the happy geographic situation of Byzantium, were viewed as 'common benefactors': the city's control of the area meant that, until it did so itself, none could levy a toll on Bosporus shipping and prevent ships from passing through. According to Polybius, the Byzantines provided this benefaction to Greece by ensuring that the barbarian Thracians and Bithynians who lived around the Bosporus did not gain possession of the shores, allowing the mutual exchange of grain, oil, wax, slaves, etc., between Greece and the Black Sea to continue.[9] No doubt the city's dominance of the Bosporus also prevented privateers operating in the area on the model of Histiaeus. The powerful position of the city in this century can only be understood by the decision of the Rhodians to make war after the Byzantines renounced this function, and ceased to guarantee free passage through the Bosporus.

In 280 large numbers of Galatians gathered and invaded Greece then Asia: approaching the Bosporus, and threatening Byzantium, they were permitted to cross into Asia by Nicomedes I, and to establish themselves there, on condition that they become allies of Bithynia, Heraclea, Cius, Teos, Chalcedon, and Byzantium.[10] One group of Galatians, led by Commontorius, split off and established a powerful kingdom at Tylis in eastern Bulgaria, which lasted until the reign of Cavarus in the 220s, when it collapsed from within, under pressure from local Thracians. Over the course of this period the Tylians launched repeated incursions into Byzantium's *chora*, demanding tribute to prevent them from invading and pillaging the Byzantines' land. The Byzantines were forced to pay gradually increasing amounts of tribute, rising from 3,000 or 5,000, to 10,000 gold pieces (probably individual 'gifts' rather than a regular levy), up to the inordinate sum of 80 talents.[11] Finally, no longer able to pay, and when none of the Greek states (with the exception of Heraclea Pontica) responded to their entreaties, they were forced to revive the

[9] Pol. 4.38.1–10.

[10] The crossing into Greece: Demetrius of Byzantium, *FGrHist* 162; Livy 38.4; Paus. 10.23.14; Pomp. Trog. Prol. 25; Memnon, *FGrHist* 434 F 11.1–2. Cf. Merle (1916) 54; Will (1966–7) I, 105–7; Dumitru (2013) 81–4.

[11] Pol. 4.45–6. 80T is four times the highest attested payments by Byzantium to the Delian League: Gabrielsen (2007) 291. For the impact of Byzantium's other barbarian neighbours, the Thracians, on the life of the city, and for a similar situation at Istros-Histria, cf. Chapter 5.

toll of 10 per cent (the *dekate*) on the value of goods carried by shipping sailing into the Pontus.[12]

The nature of this toll had no doubt changed since the fifth century. If Gabrielsen's argument is correct, as accepted in Chapter 2.3, and the fifth-century toll was paid to the great naval power, the Athenian Empire, in exchange for an escort service from the Bosporus which protected ships from pirates, then it is not likely to have functioned as such in the third century. Byzantium did not possess the naval resources of the fifth-century Delian League, and this toll must have been a direct tax on ships sailing through the strait. If unpaid, Byzantium could utilize its control of the Bosporus' shores and its own navy to coerce merchants into the Golden Horn, where they would be forced to pay the toll. In exchange, the Byzantines prevented pirates operating within their territory, but they could not have offered an armed escort from Byzantium. The toll was in this instance an absolute last resort: Polybius tells us that embassies were sent to Greece, but that none came to the city's aid.[13]

Really, the toll meant only that not Byzantium alone, but all those involved in Pontic trade, would be required to contribute to the tribute demanded by the Tylians.[14] Nevertheless, the market could not bear the costs which the Byzantines' toll imposed upon Pontic trade. Various cities appealed to Rhodes to force the Byzantines to renounce the toll. Rhodes, depicting itself as the guardian of free trade, demanded that it be rescinded. When Byzantium refused, Rhodes, alongside Prusias I of Bithynia, who involved himself in order to take advantage of the Byzantines' weaknesses (he was grieved, according to Polybius, by personal slights, and took the opportunity to seize Byzantine possessions in Asia, including Asiatic Hieron), went to war to force the removal of the toll. Byzantium was eventually forced to accept terms, after its allies Attalus and Achaius failed to make good on their promises to support the city.[15]

[12] Note that classical sources describe the fifth-century toll as levied on ships sailing *out of* the Pontus.

[13] It remains possible that Polybius is drawing on a local source for this section, which sought to exonerate the city by depicting the toll as a measure forced upon it. The threat of the toll should, it is implied, have caused Rhodes and others to have come to the city's aid pre-emptively: cf. Jefremow (2005) 60 with n. 30.

[14] So Jefremow (2005) 59.

[15] Pol. 4.47–52. A recent, exhaustive treatment of the Byzantine-Rhodian War is Jefremow (2005); also useful on the background to the war and its economic implications is Gabrielsen (2007) 287–9, stressing the artificial distinction made by

While Prusias zealously pursued the war on land, conquering Hieron and the other Asiatic possessions of Byzantium, the Rhodians procrastinated, contenting themselves with a blockade of the Bosporus—no effort was made to attack Byzantium. Very likely, the Rhodians had hoped that a display of strength would be enough to induce Byzantium to surrender, but Prusias had gone further than expected by attacking the city's territory. Once the city was surrounded on land and sea, it was forced to submit and accept terms brokered by Cavarus, king of the Tylians, who bore original responsibility for the toll. The terms of the peace are remarkable. It was not Rhodes but Prusias who had actually fought the war and forced the Byzantines to surrender, yet according to Polybius the terms were decided between the Byzantines and Rhodians without reference to Prusias. Byzantium agreed to give up the toll, assenting to friendship or a formal alliance with Rhodes and Bithynia. In exchange, the territory seized by Prusias, including Hieron, was to be returned to the city. Nothing was given to Prusias for his involvement the war, save the friendship of Byzantium.[16]

Why would Prusias have accepted these terms without recompense? Jefremow suggests plausibly that he was more concerned that Byzantium and the Bosporus remain neutral and friendly, a bulwark against his European enemies.[17] Indeed, the war reveals that the international significance of Byzantium in the third century was that the city, which now controlled the strait, kept the Bosporus and the passage to the Black Sea open to all. Unlike the fifth century, when Athens could simply close the Bosporus to its enemies or allies in revolt, or as threatened by Philip II in the fourth century, no single power possessed the area, and none could simply close the strait—Seleucus, by selling Hieron to the Byzantines (see Chapter 3.3), recognized a limit to his sovereignty at the Bosporus, as did Lysimachus, Cassander, and Antigonus in accepting the refusal of Byzantium to join their kingdoms. Prusias did not give up the conquered territory purely to retain the friendship of Byzantium; he did so because of the international economic significance of the waterway, and because he was

Polybius between the peaceful Greek 'trade-based' economy and the barbarian 'predatory' economy, which was based on tributary exactions. Other accounts of the war: *RE* III (1889) s.v. Byzantion cols 1136–7; Merle (1916) 54–9; Newskaja (1955) 153–7; Will (1966–7) II, 45–7; Schönert-Geiss I, 59–60; Berthold (1984) 94–6.

16 Pol. 4.51–2.

17 Jefremow (2005) 93.

aware that Bithynian control of the strait was not something that his European rivals would bear—pressure from without could very easily have also been exerted on Prusias by an interested Hellenistic kingdom, who desired that this crucial maritime link between the Mediterranean and the fish, wheat, and slave markets of the Black Sea remain neutral. Byzantium's position as common benefactor, successor to the Delian League, meant that its friendship was cultivated and its autonomy carefully maintained by outside powers. When Byzantium ceased to act as a benefactor it jeopardized the free passage of shipping through the strait, and none of its former allies came to the city's aid. Byzantium's freedom, that is, was predicated upon the guarantee that it maintained free passage through the strait, and this guarantee was broken when the city began taxing passage through the Bosporus.

3.2 FINANCIAL STRATAGEMS AND THE BOSPORUS

How did the 10 per cent toll function in this period? Some light on the mechanisms of the Byzantines' exploitation of the Bosporus may be cast by a passage from the Aristotelian *Oeconomica*, which reveals that already toward the close of the fourth century the Byzantines had revived the Athenian *dekate*. The *Oeconomica* is a difficult source to use: as a collection of anecdotal examples designed to illustrate specific points, it is difficult to isolate any particular anecdote in a specific historical context. What we learn is that this was a common, recurrent strategy in moments of crisis—exploiting their geographic situation, the Byzantines could in times of need prohibit the free passage of ships through the strait to derive a profit from Pontic trade. All *poleis* possessed the right to tax ships using their harbours in the form of harbour dues, and in times of crisis the ability to forcibly coerce ships into local harbours to pay these dues was tacitly recognized. The Bosporus, however, was a waterway of international economic importance, and by forcibly coercing ships into their local harbours the Byzantines were effectively cutting off maritime trade between Greece and the Black Sea. As the Rhodians' reaction to this policy shows, the Byzantines' right to tax traders using their harbours was therefore *not* tacitly accepted. How could the Byzantines exploit

their position without incurring the ire of the international community? The controlled currency system was, I shall suggest, the solution; a means by which the Byzantines replaced *ad hoc* tolls which constituted responses to recurrent crises with a longer-term, and considerably more complex monetary exchange mechanism.

In book two of the *Oeconomica*, our author gives the following description of emergency measures undertaken by the Byzantines to raise revenue:

> *Βυζάντιοι δὲ δεηθέντες χρημάτων τὰ τεμένη τὰ δημόσια ἀπέδοντο. τὰ μὲν κάρπιμα χρόνον τινά, τὰ δὲ ἄκαρπα ἀεννάως· τά τε θιασωτικὰ καὶ τὰ πατριωτικὰ ὡσαύτως· καὶ ὅσα ἐν χωρίοις ἰδιωτικοῖς ἦν· ὠνοῦντο γὰρ πολλοῦ ὧν ἦν καὶ τὸ ἄλλο κτῆμα· τοῖς δὲ θιασώταις ἕτερα χωρία, τὰ δημόσια ὅσα ἦν περὶ τὸ γυμνάσιον ἢ τὴν ἀγορὰν ἢ τὸν λιμένα· τούς τε τόπους τοὺς ἀγοραίους ἐν οἷς ἐπώλει τίς τι· καὶ τῆς θαλάττης τὴν ἁλιειαν· καὶ τὴν τῶν ἁλῶν ἁλατοπωλίαν· τῶν τ' ἐργαζομένων θαυματοποιῶν καὶ μάντεων καὶ φαρμακοπωλῶν καὶ τῶν ἄλλων τῶν τοιουτοτρόπων* <. . .>, *τὸ τρίτον δὲ μέρος τοῦ ἐργαζομένου ἀποτελεῖν ἔταξαν· τῶν τε νομισμάτων τὴν κταλλαγὴνἀπεδοντο μιᾷ τραπέζῃ, ἑτέρῳ δὲ οὐκ ἦν οὐθενὶ οὔτε ἀποδόσθαι ἑτέρῳ οὔτε πρίασθαι παῤ ἑτέρου· εἰ μή, στέρησις ἦν.*

On one occasion, when the Byzantines were in need of funds, they leased out[18] the precincts which belonged to the state.[19] Those used for the cultivation of crops for a limited period of time, those uncultivated in perpetuity.[20] In the same manner they sold precincts belonging to religious associations (*thiasoi*) and to phratries, including those on private estates; for those who lived in the surrounding area were ready to pay a high price for them. To the members of the religious associations they gave other lands (as compensation), including the public lands around the gymnasium, the agora, and the harbour. They also claimed such market places in which anything was sold, the sea fisheries, the traffic in salt, and (the places reserved for) jugglers (or 'professional magicians', lit. 'wonder-workers'), soothsayers, charm-peddlers and other similar professions . . . and they exacted from these

[18] Austin and Vidal-Naquet (1977) 303–4 render *ἀπέδοντο* 'sold'; Wartelle (Budé, 1968) 'mirent en vent'. But the precincts under cultivation could not have been sold 'for a limited period of time' (*χρόνον τινά*): van Groningen (1933) 55. 'Leased' is a better translation: so Isaac (1986) 233 n. 134. The verb seems to be referring to the farming out of public taxes (cf. Dem. 20.60 on the *dekate* at Byzantium, cited s.v. LSJ); that is, the Byzantines were auctioning off contracts for the collection of taxes on state land, not the land itself.

[19] Sanctuaries belonging to a state cult: so Austin and Vidal-Naquet (1977) 305.

[20] Or 'terres fertiles . . . et les autres'. (Wartelle).

> a tax of one-third of their profits. They also sold out the right to change money to a single exchange, allowing no other to buy or sell coin, on pain of confiscation.[21]

Unfortunately, these fiscal stratagems are undated. They immediately follow an account of actions undertaken by Lygdamis of Naxos, and precede an anecdote relating to Hippias of Athens. If, as van Groningen notes (1933: 61 for the chronology), our author has kept to strict chronological order, they must date to the late sixth century BC, but money-changing monopolies and currency exchanges would be anachronisms in the archaic period, unusual even in the Classical and Hellenistic periods. The measures must predate the composition of the *Oeconomica* in probably the late fourth century, but the nature of this text demands caution when assigning specific dates and historical contexts to the episodes it contains.

The passage, rather, illuminates a number of general features of Byzantium's property-holding system. There was a distinction between public and private lands, and in this emergency the state was capable of leasing both public and private lands to raise funds, including lands normally belonging to religious and civic associations. It also reveals the potential for the people to impose, for at least a certain period of time, a state monopoly on the fishing and salting industries.[22] The extraordinarily harsh tax of one-third on the profits of drug-sellers, soothsayers and the like is to be explained by the itinerant character of these professions—they had no permanent places of business which would allow them to be taxed normally.[23]

These stratagems are the immediate precursors to the much more complex and far-reaching system created at the Bosporus in the third century. They were also a natural development from the Athenian financial measures of the fifth century. In the fourth century, however, the *dekate*, following Byzantium's secession from the Second Athenian Confederacy and then the Social War, was apparently levied in emergencies only. The *Oeconomica* refers to another instance, temporally distinct from the current emergency, when, in need of food and money (not just funds), the Byzantines seized boats sailing out of (*ek*) the Pontus—thus probably laden with corn from the Crimea—and forced them into their harbour. Here, they were

[21] [Arist.] *Oec.* 1346b 13–26. [22] Cf. Chapter 4.
[23] So Van Groningen (1933) 59.

required to sell their goods within the Byzantine *emporion*, though it may be that the state bought up all the goods for a fixed price, alleviating the food shortage.[24] The following sentence is more difficult: 'While/ Because time was passing and the merchants were becoming irate, they (the Byzantines) undertook to pay them interest of 10 per cent, but also ordered the purchasers to pay this 10 per cent in addition to the price.'[25] Interests of 10 per cent, *tokoi epidekatoi* are here promised to the angry merchants in order to alleviate their frustration, constituting the interests accumulated on their stay at the Bosporus, and paid by the Byzantine state to the disgruntled merchants. Van Groningen suggested that the merchants were angry because they were being held up during the sailing season, and that the rising of Arcturus was approaching. The interest paid by the city was then recouped by levying it on those who purchased the goods from the traders.

However, the *tokoi epidekatoi* need not have been intended as a conciliation to traders. What the Greek literally says is that 'they accomplished interests (*tokoi*) of 10 per cent upon them' (ἐτέλουν αὐτοῖς τόκους ἐπιδεκάτους). The Loeb translates the sentence differently: 'On the merchants protesting, they were at length allowed to trade on payment of a tithe of their profits. This tax of 10 per cent was then extended to payments of all kinds.' The merchants, however, were not angry because they were not allowed to trade; indeed the whole purpose of their coercion into the Byzantines' harbour was that they trade within the city. Rather, they were upset because they were being held up on their voyage home, and forced to trade their goods at Byzantium for (probably) an enforced price below the market value. The more likely interpretation is therefore that a *tokos epidekatos* was a charge of 10 per cent of the value of their goods, levied upon the merchants and paid to the Byzantine state. The technical sense of the verb τελέω, used here with the word *tokos*, 'interest', is to pay a tax, duty, or toll demanded by the state—it is used, for example, of the metic tax, or for a contribution of corn (s.v. LSJ). In exchange for payment of this duty, the merchants were allowed to leave. The state, Gabrielsen argues, then allowed the merchants to recoup their loss by extending the 10 per cent to buyers, which, he notes, effectively ensured that their cargoes would be sold in Byzantium:

[24] [Arist.] *Oec.* 1346b 29–33; cf. Austin and Vidal-Naquet (1977) 306.

[25] As understood by Austin and Vidal-Naquet (1977) 304, 306; cf. Van Groningen and Wartelle (Budé), and Van Groningen (1933) 63–6.

'Although time was passing and the merchants were becoming angry, the Byzantines levied upon them interest of 10 per cent [i.e. on the value of their goods], a charge which they then extended to the purchasers.'[26] The Byzantines required the merchants to pay the Byzantine *polis* a duty or toll of 10 per cent; that is, they had revived the Athenian *dekate* (so also Gabrielsen), forcing merchants to put into their harbour until they paid the tax. Otherwise, the policy solved only one of the Byzantines' problems, their food shortage, but not their financial woes.

In their difficult situation, the Byzantines thus turned to the methods used by the Athenian Empire as a revenue-raising strategy, reviving the Athenian *dekate*. Given that this crisis fell in a period of food shortage, it is possible that other attested episodes in which the Byzantines forced merchants into their harbours during various shortages also constituted revivals of the *dekate*.[27] The toll was not, therefore, a normal transit tax: it was extortion, a form of *leisteia*, involving the forced coercion (τὸ κατάγειν) into local harbours of ships passing through the strait in periods of emergency, and requiring exceptional justification. Later, we saw, the 10 per cent toll was a response to the exceptional pressures placed upon the city by the Kingdom of Tylis, and led to war with Rhodes.[28]

The emergency nature of these measures is clear from the language of the first passage. Newskaja, however, adduced an elaborate and permanent scheme of state monopolies established at Byzantium: the 'public lands' (*ta choria ta demosia*) were, she argued, owned by the state but occupied by the Thracians, who were forced to work the lands of the Greek elites from the days of the early colonists. She also adduced permanent state monopolies on all fishing and salting

[26] This translation and understanding of the passage follows Gabrielsen (2007) 312–13.

[27] Other fourth century examples of the forcible coercion of grain ships by Byzantium (Chalcedon and Cyzicus are also mentioned, though Byzantium most often): Dem. 5.25; 45.64–5; [Dem.] 50.6, 17. Chalcedon in another instance did the same thing to raise funds to pay off mercenaries: [Arist.] *Oec.* 1347b 20–31. Selymbria is said to have forbade the export of grain to avoid precisely such crises, though when in need of funds it allowed stores of grain to be sold abroad ([Arist.] *Oec.* 1348b 33–9a3).

[28] Cf. De Ste. Croix (1972) 47, with Appendix VIII, arguing that even in peace time cities enjoyed a tacitly recognized right to 'bring to land' passing corn ships in periods of crisis. If this were so, the revival of the *dekate* and coercion of merchant ships ought not to have led to war with Rhodes.

activities at Byzantium.[29] Yet the passage does not allow for such reconstructions. The 'public enclosures' are merely lands attached to the sanctuaries of state deities; they are not large areas of fertile land in the Thracian hinterland. Furthermore, the measures are described in the aorist, not present tense. They are confined to specific circumstances, rather than being the more general state-run monopolies on fishing, salting, and money-changing which Newskaja adduces. Significantly, and as Isaac notes, it was not the Byzantine state which leased out the monopolies, but *hoi Byzantioi* who ἀπέδοντο the precincts, in the third person plural—a specific decision taken by the Byzantine *damos*, as a response to particular circumstances.[30] Indeed, it would be impractical for the state to control all fishing activities in open water. Rather, it could only control the administration of certain public fisheries (rented madragues), which must have existed alongside privately owned fisheries.[31] Otherwise, the inference of a monopoly ought to also be extended to drug-peddling, etc.[32]

In the fourth century, then, the Byzantines did not take the example of the Athenian Empire to its logical conclusion, by instituting a complex and far-reaching financial system at the Bosporus designed to take advantage of their advantageous position. They were content to impose tolls and lease out state lands in emergencies, whenever the situation allowed it. In the following century, we shall see, a new system was established, which exploited the city's successful defence of its independence and control of the Bosporus against Philip of Macedon. Though Byzantium and the Bosporus remained autonomous, the city was unable to coerce ships or levy a tax on Black Sea trade without provoking other states into war, as happened in 221/0. In lieu of a toll, both cities at the Bosporus cooperated to take advantage of their control of the shores, and created a controlled economic system dominated by the two cities. Emergency recourse to the sale of monopolies, the leasing of state lands, tolls and seizures of

[29] Newskaja (1955) 43–4, 47–50. [30] Isaac (1986) 234 n. 135.

[31] For the temporary nature of these measures: Van Groningen (1933) 57–8 and Isaac (1986) 233–4, who highlights the issues with Newskaja's account. Cf. also the discussion of the sale of citizenship in Chapter 5.1. For the emergency nature of monopolies in the Classical period, cf. Finley (1985a) 165–6. On fishing monopolies, cf. Chapter 4.

[32] Isaac (1986) 234 n. 137: 'she [Newskaja] avoids the absurd but logical conclusion that there was also a state-monopoly on juggling, soothsaying, drug peddling and other such professions'.

shipping, come in this period to be replaced by a permanent system which guaranteed freedom of shipping through the strait, giving in return for acceptance of the system the guarantee of safe passage through the strait, whose shores and approaches the Byzantines controlled—the descendant of Athens' earlier protective service in the region. It was only when this system failed to meet the demands posed by the Tylians that the Byzantines were forced, in desperation, to begin forcibly coercing all ships into their harbour to pay this tax directly.

3.3 GREATER BYZANTIUM

Before turning to the financial system itself, it is necessary to explore the connected process of territorial expansion undertaken by Byzantium in this period. The precise context of Byzantium's acquisition of this territory is unclear, and it is probable that at least some areas were gained during the fourth century. The consequence is clearer: by the end of the third century, their network of overseas possessions gave the Byzantines a zone of control extending along the length of the Bosporus, to the gulf of Astacus, Mysia, and the southern coast of the Propontis. The controlled currency system was closely bound up with Byzantium's overseas expansion and its creation of a sphere of control in the Propontis, and was, we shall see, precisely contemporary. Both processes were, I suggest, interconnected.

There are two kinds of evidence for these overseas possessions: passing literary references, and dialect inscriptions, both of which are examined by Gabelko, who outlines the various chronological difficulties with our evidence.[33] Gabelko's chronological reconstruction leads him to argue that the acquisition of Byzantium's Asiatic territory was a long process begun in the fifth century, and not a short-lived phenomenon limited to the third century. According to this view, Byzantine expansionist ambition in Bithynia was the long-term guiding factor in the city's foreign policy. I suggest, however, that the acquisition of these areas was closely linked to the city's economic

[33] Gabelko (1996); cf. Fernoux (2004) 32–3. On the territory in Mysia, see Robert (1949a) 38–44. A useful recent discussion of the territories of Byzantium and Chalcedon is Robu (2014c) 189–93 (Byzantium's Asiatic peraea at 190–1).

system in the third century. Byzantine overseas ambitions were kindled by the experience of independence in the mid-fourth century, and are unlikely to have begun while Byzantium remained subject to Athens.

Inscriptions from Mysia, written in the Doric dialect used at Byzantium (and Chalcedon), have been assigned dates ranging between the third and first centuries BC. The first group was found in the modern village Zeytinbağı, called in antiquity Triglia, some 7 km west of Apameia on the Propontis coast, east of Cyzicus. A series of documents of a Thiasos of Zeus, Kybele, and Apollo, written with Doric forms, was taken by Robert as evidence that the area was the possession of one of the Dorian cities of the region, and that Byzantium was the most likely candidate.[34] A second group of inscriptions was found in and around the modern villages in Yalova, corresponding to the ancient places Strobilos and Pylai, north-east of Cius.[35] Many of these inscriptions contain Doric forms,[36] but one, from the reign of Commodus, is dated according to an official called the *hieromnamon*, the eponymous magistrate of Byzantium.[37] The official in question is an imperial woman, Bruttia Crispina, the wife of Commodus—as Corsten notes, the name of the honorand on the stele is erased, and may have been Commodus himself. Corsten points out that this territory in Yalova, unlike Triglia, which would later belong to Apameia, remained a Byzantine possession at least until the reign of Commodus.[38] The area brought with it possession of the famous baths of Pythia and the Cape of Triton.[39]

One other area in Asia which, at certain times, belonged to Byzantium was the area around Lake Dascylitis, which according to Strabo bordered the territory of Cyzicus.[40] Corsten has outlined the various places which carried this name: the most famous was south of Cyzicus on lake Manyas, the site of the Persian satrapy. Another Dascyleion appears on the Athenian tribute lists paying 500D. The satrapy has been identified by excavations carried out by Akurgal at the modern Ergili, which turned up Achaemenid bullae and seals of Xerxes.

[34] *IApameia* 33–5, with Corsten's comments on pp. 47–8, 50–1, and Robert (1948a) 38–44. See also Gabelko (1996) 121.

[35] Corsten (1987) 162; Foss (1997) 87.

[36] *IApameia* 107, 108, 113, 116, 117, 123, 124, 141.

[37] *IApameia* 114. For the *hieromnamon*, cf. Chapter 6.2.

[38] Corsten (1987) 162.

[39] So Corsten (1987) 162 and 120 (on Bruttia Crispina).

[40] Strab. 12.8.11.

The smaller town of Dascyleion was further north, the modern harbour of Eskel Liman, with a promontory which strikes out into the Propontis at Apameia.[41] Very likely, Byzantium possessed this town and territory stretching up to Lake Manyas (ancient Lake Dascylitis), control of which was contested with Cyzicus.

It is difficult to know when exactly Byzantium acquired these areas. In the lead up to the Byzantine-Rhodian War, we saw, Prusias I of Bithynia took the opportunity to seize from Byzantium a district in Mysia, on the southern coast of the Propontis, which he was forced to return to the Byzantines by the terms decided at the end of the war.[42] This must refer to the territory in Yalova, closest to Bithynia, and may be the area of Byzantium's Bithynian slaves, mentioned by Phylarchus, enslaved and exploited in the same way that the Spartans used helots.[43] According to Dionysius, Byzantium was also given territory in Asia (*χώραν ἐπὶ τῆς Ἀσίας*) as a gift by Ptolemy II Philadelphus, along with a large amount of grain, missiles, and money (*καὶ σίτου πολλὰς μυριάδας καὶ βέλη καὶ χρήματα*) at an undisclosed date. In return, Ptolemy was worshipped as a god in Byzantium, and a temple was built in his honour.[44]

We have then an absolute *terminus ante quem* of 220, the Byzantine-Rhodian War, and a gift at some point in the reign of Ptolemy II. Habicht assumed that all of Byzantium's Asiatic possessions were acquired at once, and, on the strength of the Dionysius passage, argued that Ptolemy II ceded all the areas to Byzantium at the time of the First Syrian War with Antiochus I in 275/4 or shortly before; an attempt to gain the support of this important city in the Ptolemies' upcoming conflict with the Seleucids.[45] The rationale for

[41] Corsten (1988) 53–4; see Corsten (1988) and Nollé (1992) 1–3 for an overview of Dascyleion and modern literature. For the excavations: see Balkan (1959), esp. 123–7, and Kapton (2001) 57–63, with Akurgal (1956). See also: Hasluck (1910) 57–8, Munro (1912), and Bakir (2001).

[42] Pol. 4.50.4 (*τὴν ἐπὶ τῆς Ἀσίας χώραν*), 9 (*τῆς Μυσίας χώρας τῆς ὑπὸ Βυζαντίους ταττομένης*); cf. Walbank, *HCP* I, 504–5, and Gabelko (1996) 122.

[43] *FGrHist* 81 F 8, with Gabelko (1996) 121–2, 127.

[44] Dion. Byz. 41. Ptolemy's gift is mirrored in another gift to Heraclea, and was a continuation of his father's euergetistic attitude toward cities like Rhodes: cf. Memnon, *FGrHist* 434 F 17. See Bringmann and von Steuben (1995) I, 271.

[45] Habicht (1970) 116–21; see on this Bringmann and von Steuben (1995) I, 271 and Gabelko (1996) 122 with n. 5; cf. Otto (1931) 408–9. Merle (1916) 56 selected the Second Syrian War (260–253 BC). The various possibilities are outlined by Avram (2003) 1204 and Archibald (2007) 259. On the possibility that Ptolemy II led a Lagid fleet through the strait, which would have allowed him to personally visit the city, cf. Otto (1931) 408–9 and Habicht (1970) 117 n. 7.

his chronology is sound. Byzantium was a wealthy city, so for Ptolemy to have sent it his support suggests that this was a time of crisis. The gift of βέλη shows that the nature of this crisis was military, while the grain implies that Byzantium's own hinterland was occupied. Only one such episode is known to have coincided with Ptolemy II's reign: the crossing over of the Galatians to Asia in 280/79, and their early regular occupations of Byzantium's land from 277, at which time Heraclea sent Byzantium 4,000 gold staters in support.[46] Another possibility is that the gift by Ptolemy II should be connected to a siege of Byzantium by Antiochus II, mentioned by Memnon, which is dated, by Avram, to 255/4.[47] One problem with this date is the existence of large quantities of Ptolemaic tetradrachms countermarked by Byzantium. If these Ptolemaic tetradrachms were part of the gift sent by Ptolemy to Byzantium, as accepted below (Chapter 3.4, p. 127 n. 106, with references), then they lend support to Habicht's chronology. The original gift, mentioned by Dionysius, was likely sent at the time of the crossing over of the Galatians in 280/79, and was sustained throughout the following period while Byzantium was compelled to pay tribute to the Galatians at Tylis.

The land given by Ptolemy was therefore first acquired in the early third century, and was retained until at least the time of Commodus. There were *two* areas in Mysia, however, Triglia further south near Cyzicus, and Yalova to the north, closer to Cius. It is possible that both were acquired at different times. Gabelko argues that the domains of Ptolemy could not have stretched so far as the Asiatic bay at Yalova. Yalova must, according to him, have been acquired at some time earlier than the territory in Triglia. An episode in 416 BC, narrated by Diodorus, is invoked to date the acquisition of Yalova to the late fifth century BC.[48]

According to Diodorus, Byzantium with Chalcedon invaded Bithynia where, accompanied by Thracians, they devastated the Bithynians' land, and took many prisoners.[49] The expedition would, according to Gabelko, have reached the southern coast of the bay of Astacus. It is difficult, however, to imagine that the prisoners taken at this time were the Bithynian 'helots' mentioned by Phylarchus—Diodorus

[46] Memnon, *FGrHist* 434 F 11.1; cf. Bringmann and von Steuben (1995) I, 271.

[47] *FGrHist* 434 F 15. Avram (2003) 1206–7, and (2004).

[48] Gabelko (1996) 122–8.

[49] Diod. 12.82.2.

claims that all the prisoners taken by the Byzantines and Chalcedonians were executed.

Of course no archaeological evidence contradicts Gabelko's chronology. But it would have been more natural for Chalcedon, which lay on the Asiatic side of the strait, and not Byzantium to take possession of these areas, given that both cities are involved together in Diodorus' narrative. A later episode is equally likely: in 357 or earlier in 364/3, following the revolt of Byzantium from the Second Athenian Confederacy, a coercive *sympoliteia* was concluded with Chalcedon, bringing the city with all of its Asiatic territory into the sway of Byzantium.[50] It could easily have been at this point, and not during the fifth-century expedition, that Byzantium took the opportunity to acquire land in Bithynia, appropriating it from its junior partner Chalcedon, along with the Chalcedonians' Bithynian (not Thracian) 'helots'. Such a chronology fits with Byzantium's other expansionist activity, which did not and probably could not begin until the late fourth century: in the same period it made Selymbria a dependant village within in its own *chora*.[51] That is, Byzantine expansion could not begin until the late fourth century, once the city was free of Athenian interference, continuing into and throughout the third century. Expansionist ambitions may even have prompted Byzantium's revolt from Athens in the fourth century.

The motives behind this expansionist policy become clear in Byzantium's third-century acquisition of Hieron, the symbolic northern entrance of the Bosporus on its Asiatic side. The site was a bone of contention between Byzantium and Chalcedon, but Byzantium, some time before the Byzantine-Rhodian War, was able to purchase it for a 'considerable sum of money' (*μεγάλα χρημάτα*) from an official of Seleucus II or III.[52] The Byzantines' motives according to Polybius are remarkable: 'they did not wish to leave anyone with a base from which to attack traders with the Pontus or interfere with the slave trade or the fishing'.[53] Hieron, as we have seen, was a sanctuary where ships massed before beginning their voyage down

[50] Theopompus *FGrHist* 115 F 62 (the Byzantines imposed a democracy in Chalcedon at this time); Dem. 15.26; Polyaen. 6.25; cf. Merkelbach, *IKalch*, p. 94, and Robinson (2011) 147.

[51] Dem. 15.26; *IByz* S 23, with Robert (1946) 61–4.

[52] On the episode, see Dumitru (2013) 90, opting for Seleucus II.

[53] Pol. 4.50.3 (transl. Paton, Loeb); cf. Dion. Byz. 92–4, and see the translation of and comments on the Polybius passage in Gabrielsen (2007) 314.

the Bosporus. It was also the point from which the length of the Bosporus was measured, and was a reference point in maritime loans. Furthermore, it was a location where honorary *stelai* and inscriptions carrying regulations concerning financial arrangements, such as the Olbian currency exchange law (of special interest to traders) were erected, since everyone travelling through the Bosporus would end up at Hieron—probably written records of loans and maritime contracts were deposited here also.[54] The site, in short, was a perfect location at which to levy a toll or set up a customs exchange.

As Gabrielsen observes, the motives attributed by Polybius to the purchase of Hieron create the impression that Byzantium was building up a monopolistic control of all locations along both sides of the strait at which a customs house might be created, and attempting to ensure that none could compete with its own dominance in the area—precisely the kind of control which previously only powerful maritime empires could hope to possess.[55] It was also an attempt to ensure that the passage between the Black Sea and Aegean remained free from molestation, by depriving others of the opportunity to use Hieron to obstruct shipping as Philip II had done. That Byzantium was concerned with establishing for itself a monopoly is confirmed by a fragment of Memnon of Heraclea: a war, he claims, broke out between Byzantium and Callatis and Istros, because the Byzantines were alarmed that Callatis planned to transform Tomis (on the western side of the Pontus) into a monopoly (*μονοπώλιον*).[56] The

[54] Honorary decrees for Leucon of the (Cimmerian) Bosporus were set up at Peiraieus, the Cimmerian Bosporus, and Hieron (Dem. 20.36). The Olbian currency law: *IKalch* 16. A few other inscriptions have been found at Hieron: *IKalch* 13–16. For a study of the site, its archaeological remains, and testimonia: Moreno (2008). Moreno suggests, at 667 nn. 43 and 44, that a copy of the Peace of Callias would also have been set up here. This is why Isocrates is our earliest source for the Peace, for his students from the Bosporus kingdom of the Crimea would have passed by Hieron on the way to Athens. On Hieron, see also Belfiore (2009) 316–17.

[55] Gabrielsen (2007) 313–15, followed by Robu (2014b) 27, 30 and (2014c) 197.

[56] *FGrHist* 434 F 13, with Gabrielsen (2011) 223–6 and Gabrielsen (2007) 313–16; cf. Avram (2003) 1189–90, 1208–10, who argues that the war over Tomis was part of a larger dispute between Ptolemy II and Antiochus II, which caused division between pro-Seleucid cities on the western Pontus, such as Tomis, Mesembria, and Callatis, and the anti-Seleucid cities of the Northern League, including Byzantium and Heraclea. This reconstruction is entirely plausible if it is viewed as an *ἀληθεστάτη πρόφασις*. Yet the possibility remains that the *αἰτία* was the cause stated by Memnon, the creation of Tomis as a monopoly. This war is usually connected with the siege of Byzantium by Antiochus II mentioned by Memnon (*FGrHist* 434 F 15), and seen in an anti-Seleucid context. On this, see Archibald (2007) 258–9. The dating of the siege

Callatians may thus have intended to rival Byzantium's position by establishing Tomis as their own customs exchange on Pontic trade.[57] The monopoly which was threatened by Tomis was, I suspect, the Byzantines' moneying monopoly, which would have been in its early stages in the 260s.

Further evidence that taxation of some form was the motive behind Byzantium's expansion may be found in the Roman customs law of Asia, set up at Ephesus in AD 62. The first clause of this law concerns the tax (*telos*) on import/export at the Pontus. Though neither Byzantium, which was a free city and later, at the time of Trajan, was incorporated into the Roman province of Pontus-Bithynia (not Asia), nor Chalcedon, which at the time of this law was a free city, belonged to the province of Asia, their territories (*chorai*) are nevertheless treated as though belonging to the province, in order to facilitate the tax on Black Sea trade:

> The *lex* for the *telos* of Asia on import and export by land and sea, [where it lies beside the coast of Asia and where the boundaries] of Cappadocia, Galatia, and Bithynia girdle Asia, *and where the lands of the Chalcedonians and Byzantines within the* [*same boundaries* have customs stations for the sake of the *telos* on] import or export by sea at the mouth of the Black Sea . . . [58]

Both cities were notionally free; what mattered for Roman control of the strait were their territories, that is, Byzantium's overseas possessions and control of the two coasts of the Bosporus (including Hieron), not the urban centres themselves. According to Pliny, the river Rhyndacus served as the boundary of the province of Asia, separating it from Bithynia.[59] Byzantium's territory in Triglia, which lay east of the river, was nevertheless incorporated by the Romans, who cared for such

is not clear: see references in Avram (2003) 1183 n. 3. Newskaja (1955) 151 dated it to *c.*260; Beloch, *Gr. Ges.*[2] IV, 1, 672 n. 5 and Will (1966–7) I, 247–8 to the end of Antiochus II's reign, without further specificity. On the war with Tomis, cf. Robu (2014b) and Robu (2014c) 194.

[57] Robu (2014b) 27–8: 'raisonnable de penser qu'elles étaient en rapport avec le prélèvement des taxes sur les transactions commerciales à Tomis'. Robu goes on (28–30) to connect the war with Tomis with the purchase of Hieron, discussed above (pp. 108–10). See also Robu's discussion of the economic importance of Hieron and Chrysopolis to Byzantium, and their connection to the war over Tomis, in Robu (2014c) 191–3.

[58] ll. 7–11: *αἵτινές τε χῶραι Καλχαδονίων Βυζαντίων ἐντὸς τῶν κτλ*. Reconstructions after Cottier et al. (2008); cf. Engelmann and Knibbe (1989). Lines 13–15 reveal that the collector or his procurator was located in Chalcedon, not Byzantium.

[59] Plin. *HN* 5.142. See S. Mitchell in Cottier et al. (2008) 178–82.

boundaries only while it was convenient for them to do so: the area was used for control of the southern approach to the Bosporus, and thus to the toll on Black Sea shipping, so was annexed.

Byzantium, supported by Ptolemy II, who granted the city some of this territory, and indirectly by Seleucus II, whose sale of Hieron allowed Byzantium to ensure its control over the northern Bosporus, was thus building up a sphere of control over the strait and its outlying regions. Areas in Triglia and Yalova, on the southern coast of the Sea of Marmara, would have provided suitable locations for a series of operating bases which could be used to protect fleets as they approached or left the Bosporus. Importantly, there existed excellent maritime links between Byzantium and these areas. Foss shows that near Yalova in the Byzantine period proper, on the coast of the gulf of Nicomedia, was a place called Pylai, named because it served as the 'gate' to Byzantine Asia, the point of disembarkation from Constantinople.[60] A Byzantine-era inscription found here reveals the existence of an official in charge of a warehouse or local depot, an *ἀποθηκάριος*.[61] The depot was used to collect provisions from the neighbouring countryside for shipment to Constantinople; at an earlier period it must have acted as a minor *emporion* for Byzantium.[62]

The maritime links between Byzantium's Asiatic territory here and the city are also evoked in an epigram of Antiphilus of Byzantium, elucidated by Robert:

> *Ἀρχέλεω, λιμενῖτα, σὺ μέν, μάκαρ, ἠπίῳ αὔρῃ*
> *πέμπε κατὰ σταθερῆς οἰχομένην· ὀθόνην*
> *ἄχρις ἐπὶ Τρίτωνα· σὺ δ' ἠόνος ἄκρα λελογχὼς*
> *τὴν ἐπὶ Πυθείου ῥύεο ναυστολίην·*
> *κεῖθεν δ', εἰ Φοίβῳ μεμελήμεθα πάντες ἀοιδοί,*
> *πλεύσομαι εὐαεῖ θαρσαλέως ζεφύρῳ.*

Blessed harbour god (Robert: Priapus), send with gentle breeze Archelaus' departing sails along the undisturbed water as far as Triton (Paton: 'as far as the open sea'), and you, ruler of the furthest point of the shore, protect his voyage as far as the Pythian (Paton: shrine; Robert: baths). From there,

[60] Foss (1997). Pylai is named on the Peutinger Table, showing how well known this route was. For Byzantine-era communication between Constantinople and Bithynia, cf. Lefort (1995); on Nicomedia, Foss (1995).

[61] *IApameia* 129; for the term, cf. Corsten's commentary.

[62] Foss (1997) 87.

> if all we singers are dear to Phoebus, I shall sail with confidence in the fair western wind.[63]

Robert showed that Antiphilus, a native of Byzantium, is referring to a voyage from Byzantium to Nicomedia, with a stop at the gulf of Izmit and then along the southern coast of the gulf. The epigram is, consequently, full of allusions to local places, which can be connected to areas in Byzantium's territory here.[64] Each allusion to a local place takes the form of an invocation of a deity. The phrase *ἄχρις ἐπὶ Τρίτωνα* relates not to the high sea, but to a specific site: the Cape of Triton, directly south of Byzantium across the Propontis, at the western extremity of the peninsula in which Yalova was located. We have seen already that Byzantium's treasury at Olympia possessed a statue of Triton. Continuing the course of Antiphilus' journey, Robert recognized that *τὴν ἐπὶ Πυθείου* referred to the second stop along the voyage: the Pythia Therma, located in the area of Yalova, a famous resort in the Byzantine period.[65] Both areas were connected to the city by tight maritime links and will have served as *emporia*, warehouses to store goods for export to Byzantium, holiday resorts, and naval bases or refuges.

This whole zone of control, which encompassed not only both sides of the strait along their entire length (including their seven 'elbows'), as far north as Phileas on the western side,[66] and encompassing Hieron at the northern mouth, extended along the northern coast of the Propontis as far as Selymbria, and in this area in the south to Lake Dascylitis, where it bordered on Cyzicus' territory (see Fig. 3.1). Possession of this space was a pre-requisite for Byzantium's closed-currency system, and for its exploitation of shipping. Lacking the kind of maritime dominance which Athens had wielded, the Byzantines relied on controlling the harbours within this sphere and using them to operate fleets or officials which could enforce their financial policies. This, then, is the immediate context for the third-century coinage system, which we shall now turn to.

[63] *Anth. Pal.* 10.17. Translation based on W.R. Paton's 1916 Loeb edition, with amendments by Robert (1979).

[64] Robert (1979). See also the discussion of this passage in Corsten (1987) 142.

[65] Robert (1979) 262, 264–70, 284. Testimonia for the baths along with the inscriptions (all from the Byzantine-era proper) found during excavations are collected in *IApameia*, pp. 140–6; those for the Cape of Triton in pp. 157–61.

[66] Ps.-Scym. 722–3.

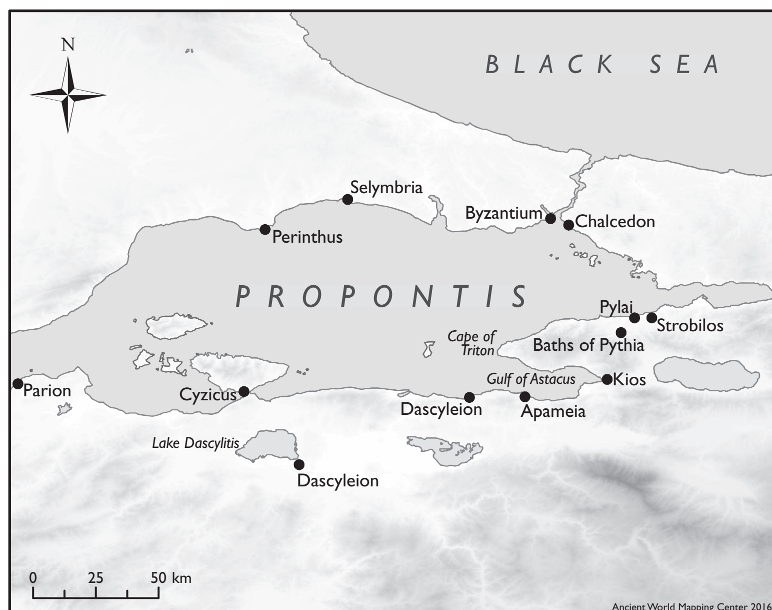

Fig. 3.1. The Propontis. The Ancient World Mapping Center, 2016. Placements follow Map 52 of the Barrington Atlas (C. Foss).

3.4 THE BOSPORUS 'CONTROLLED-CURRENCY' SYSTEM

The third century saw Byzantium at the height of its power. Free from the direct control of any of the Hellenistic kingdoms, Byzantium's possessions sprawled across both shores of the Bosporus, and extended to the southern shore of the Propontis where they bordered on the territory of Cyzicus. Moreover, Byzantium possessed a powerful patron in the form of the Ptolemies. Ptolemy II Philadelphus, we have seen, was partly responsible for the Byzantines' acquisition of their overseas domains, and in addition had helped to save Byzantium from attacks by the neighbouring Celts by providing the city with weapons and cash.[67] It is in this context that the Byzantines apparently established an elaborate, far-reaching, and complicated system of monetary exchange which manipulated weight standards

[67] Dion. Byz. 41.

and countermarks to profit from the exchange of currency. The existence of this monetary system was first adduced by Henri Seyrig, in his 1968 study, 'Monnaies hellénistiques de Byzance et de Calcédoine'.[68] Since Seyrig's article, Constantin Marinescu has produced a comprehensive die-study of the posthumous Lysimachi minted by Chalcedon and Byzantium, *Making and Spending Money along the Bosporus*.[69] His conclusions require that Seyrig's picture must be modified in certain aspects, particularly regarding the chronology which Seyrig established.

In Chapter 2, I expressed some scepticism toward the idea that Athens was able to create what amounted to a 'bureaucracy' at the Bosporus, and explored in detail the evidence that the Athenians' activities in the region went quite so far. In a similar way, the idea that two small cities were able to establish an elaborate currency-exchange system designed to profit from the passage of coinage through the Bosporus implies a remarkable level of planning and forethought, a high level of state involvement, as well as the institutional capacity to enact such a complicated system.[70] In an effort to decide whether we can accept such complicated reconstructions I explore the evidence which has been adduced for the system, and offer some suggestions about the historical context of the coinage system and the involvement of the Ptolemies. The evidence, I argue, supports Seyrig's view of a controlled monetary system at the Bosporus, but that this was something extraordinary. The reason it was possible for the Bosporus cities to cooperate and to impose this monopoly was because of their unique relationship with the Bosporus strait. The inhabitants of the Bosporus were *used* to economic complexity. For generations various different agents—Persians, Athenians, Spartans—had exploited the continual flow of merchant traffic passing through the strait, leaving precedents which the Byzantines and Chalcedonians

[68] Seyrig (1968).

[69] Marinescu (1996) is the author's unpublished thesis. Dr Marinescu has communicated to me that the thesis is being prepared for publication as a monograph with the American Numismatic Society (expected 2017–18), and will include a number of new coins which have come to light since his study. For a discussion of some of these new developments, see Marinescu (2014). The main conclusions of the die-study, and their significance for our understanding of Seyrig's controlled currency system, are published in Marinescu (2000).

[70] Cf. Finley (1985a) 168, discussing the Olbian currency-exchange law: 'the rule was thus total non-interference by the state in monetary matters, save for the political insistence on the employment of local coins'.

were able to adapt for themselves. In the third century, the tentative steps taken by the Byzantines from the late fourth century onwards, which were mentioned in the *Oeconomica* and discussed above (Chapter 3.2), evolve into something much more far-reaching.

The city's relationship with Lysimachus is the natural place to begin this exploration of the local monetary economy. After the battle of Ipsus in 301, Lysimachus became king of Asia Minor and Thrace, a kingdom which lasted until his death at Corupedium in 281. The Bosporus was of obvious significance for the maintenance of communications between Lysimachus' territory in Thrace and Asia, and Lysimachus seems to have hoped to make Byzantium accept a garrison, requesting that it join his kingdom. The only information on this comes from an anecdote preserved by Plutarch. Lysimachus is said to have become so arrogant that, when approached by a Byzantine embassy, he exclaimed 'The Byzantines now come to me when I am touching heaven with my spear!' In response, the Byzantine ambassador Pasiades laconically remarked, 'Then let us be off, lest he make a hole in the sky with his spear-point!'[71] The story perhaps alludes to a refusal on the part of the Byzantines to be incorporated into Lysimachus' kingdom. This inference is supported numismatically, for neither Byzantium nor Chalcedon ever struck Lysimachi, Lysimachus' official royal coinage, during his lifetime, only posthumous or pseudo-Lysimachi minted after his death.

The obverse of these posthumous coins depicts the head of the deified Alexander the Great with the horns of Ammon; the reverse a seated Athena and a Nike, with the legend *ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΛΥΣΙΜΑΧΟΥ* (see Fig. 3.2). The sequence was introduced by Lysimachus in 297 as his personal royal coinage, minted at various royal mints during his lifetime. There were no royal mints, however, at Cyzicus, Chalcedon, or Byzantium—good reason to believe that the cities never belonged to Lysimachus' kingdom, despite Byzantium's position in Thrace proper, and despite Lysimachus' attempt to entice the Byzantines into his kingdom.[72]

[71] Plut. *Mor.* 338A–B (transl. Cole Babbitt, Loeb). On this episode, cf. Merle (1916) 53, Newskaja (1955) 147, and Dumitru (2013) 85.

[72] On the coins, see Marinescu (1996) 2 (and *passim*). For the lifetime issues, cf. Lund (1992) 131–4. A comprehensive, but now out-of-date, treatment is Müller (1858). On the posthumous issues, Seyrig (1958) 617, Figure 2 illustrates the distribution of mints. These coins are not included in Schönert-Geiss I.

Fig. 3.2. Byzantium, posthumous-Lysimachus, *c.*270–30 BC. 16.25g. Heberden Coin Room, 3759. With permission of the Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford.

Those cities which only began to mint Lysimachi after Lysimachus' death are associated with the anti-Seleucid agitation of the Northern League, and the initial choice may have been an anti-Seleucid gesture.[73] Our only evidence for this league comes from the patchy account of Memnon. Originally, the League seems to have formed as a response to the threat posed by Seleucus I to Heraclea. After the settlement following Corupedium, Seleucus sought the recognition of the cities in the north of Asia Minor, but was received frostily by the Heracleots—he dismissed the city's embassies in anger. In response, Heraclea sent envoys to Mithridates I of Pontus, Byzantium, and Chalcedon seeking alliance, though we are not informed how these envoys were received.[74] Later, by 280/79, the League was expanded or formalized when Antiochus I made war against Nicomedes of Bithynia. All those who opposed Seleucid influence in the area now joined the League, including Antigonus Gonatas, Nicomedes, Chalcedon, Heraclea, and Byzantium.[75] As opponents of the Seleucids, McGing notes, the members were also natural allies of the Ptolemies, with the First Syrian War between the Ptolemies and Seleucids breaking out in 274, shortly after the formation of the League. As noted above (pp. 109–10), it may also be in relation to this anti-Seleucid context that Byzantium made war with Callatis over Tomis,

[73] Seyrig (1958) 616, 618–19 with fig. 1, and Thompson (1968) for the distribution of the royal mints.

[74] Memnon, *FGrHist*, 434 F 7.2.

[75] For discussion, cf. McGing (1986) 16–17, 19, noting that there is insufficient evidence to believe that Mithridates I was a member, and Avram (2003) 1186–7.

and that Antiochus II, at an uncertain date and for unknown reasons but possibly in retaliation for the Byzantine attack on Callatis, besieged Byzantium.[76] Whatever hostility existed between Byzantium and the Seleucids seems to have been short lived, for soon after the Byzantines purchased Hieron from Seleucus II or III.[77]

The Lysimachi not only far outlived Lysimachus himself, they also outlived any initial function they may have had as an anti-Seleucid gesture, and were minted as local civic issues for over two centuries following Lysimachus' death until the Roman conquest. These coins retained his types but carried local marks. Byzantium's posthumous Lysimachi are among the most prolific of all the posthumous civic issues, minted without a break from as early as *c.*270 and continuing into the second century and beyond.[78] Chalcedon's came to an end around 150. As one of the most important producers of Lysimachi, Byzantium was at the centre of a regional coinage network which dominated in the Propontis and the western and southern shores of the Black Sea, where the Lysimachi became a specially favoured currency.[79] Even local dynasts such as the Spartocid kings in the Crimea minted imitations of these coins, and they seem to have been viewed as a favoured border currency, used to pay tributary gifts to Thracian and Scythian tribes along the Pontic coast. Byzantium's Lysimachi were thus inaugurated to provide a widely acceptable tender which could be used to pay the city's tribute to the Tylian Kingdom throughout this century, shortly after the Galatians arrived in Thrace in 277. As Marinescu argues, they constituted a kind of international coinage, designed for export and external payments, moving outwards from the city, and distinct from the coinage used for transactions within it.[80] This regional coinage centred on the

[76] Memnon, *FGrHist* 434 F 13, 15, with Avram (2003) 1203.

[77] Pol. 4.50.2–3; Dion. Byz. 92–3. Chrubasik (2011) 35, 51 suggests plausibly that this was an attempt to create a buffer between Seleucus II's territory and that of his usurper brother Antiochus Hierax, who had been active in Thrace, illustrating once again the value of the region as a neutral bloc.

[78] Marinescu (1996) 3. For dating, see Marinescu (1996) 308–27, where the beginning of the Lysimachi is dated to the 260s; more recent discoveries incline Marinescu to date their inception earlier still, to *c.*270: Marinescu (2014), esp. 387.

[79] The Anadol (Odessa) hoard (*IGCH* 866), buried *c.*228–20, contains over 1,000 golden coins, including Lysimachi of Byzantium, Chalcedon, Lampsacus, Sestos, Mytilene, and Perinthus. For the Lysimachi and the Pontic Kingdom, cf. Price (1968) 1–12.

[80] Marinescu (1996) 406–7, noting the lack of lower denominations; see also Marinescu (1996) 3, 5–6, characterizing the coins as a favoured border currency.

Pontus and Propontis, but spread considerably further. Posthumous Lysimachi have been found in numerous hoards in Anatolia, the Propontis, along the Black Sea, and in the Crimea. A full analysis of hoards containing posthumous Lysimachi is beyond the scope of this book, and can be found in Marinescu's die-study—they extend to Macedon, the Chersonese, Thessaly, Mesopotamia, and Sardis, lasting throughout the second century and early first, but are especially common in the Black Sea and the Sea of Marmara, where they were evidently highly prized.[81]

These Lysimachi were not, however, the only tender minted by the Bosporus cities during this period, and were not used for internal, small-scale transactions. Byzantium and Chalcedon also minted silver issues with local types, struck on a different weight-standard to the Lysimachi. It was this use of two different weight-standards which led Seyrig to his conclusions about the coinage system. Following the two large fourth-century silver emissions on the Persic and subsequently the Chian weight-standards, which ceased around 340—to be connected with Philip II's siege?—Byzantium minted another large-scale silver emission, alongside bronze emissions of varying extents, during the third century. The autonomous silver tetradrachms of the city were struck on what is usually referred to as the 'Phoenician' weight-standard, weighing between 13 and 14g to the tetradrachm. This was significantly lower than the Attic standard of 16.8g to the tetradrachm, which had been set as the standardized weight for international trade by Alexander, and similar to the Ptolemaic weight standard in Egypt, which varied between 13.5 and 14.3g.[82] These tetradrachms depict a veiled head of Demeter on the obverse, Poseidon sitting on a rock on the reverse (see Fig. 3.3). In parallel, Chalcedon minted tetradrachms which differ only in depicting Apollo on the reverse, not Poseidon. Like the late fifth-/fourth-century issues, depicting a heifer representing Io, the synergy apparent on the two cities' coinage reveals their close cooperation.[83] Byzantium's autonomous tetradrachms carry the city's ethnic (with an archaic 'Corinthian' beta), incorporating changing monograms representing financial officials and, most of the time, *epi* followed

[81] Marinescu (1996) Chapter 4 is a catalogue with detailed information on all hoards containing posthumous Lysimachi.

[82] On the weight standards, see Le Rider (1971) 152 and Marinescu (1996) 381–2.

[83] Schönert-Geiss I, 979–1042; cf. pp. 56, 62; bronze emissions: nos. 1043–1250.

Fig. 3.3. Byzantium, local silver, Demeter-Poseidon series. 12.84g. Heberden Coin Room. With permission of the Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford.

by the name of an individual official in the genitive, denoting the eponymous magistrate of the year. These monograms and names are one of the few reliable indicators of the series' dating. The surviving number of pieces is too small to allow reliable internal dating on the basis of stylistic criteria, and the coins' circulation appears to have been primarily local, meaning that hoard evidence is limited.[84] Only ten personal names appear on the coins.[85] This led Seyrig to conclude that the chronology of this series was limited to *c.*235–20, with a period of minting confined to around a decade or slightly longer.[86] These years correspond precisely with the lead up to Byzantium's war with Rhodes.

Two pieces of evidence permit a terminal date for most of this series. Firstly, two of the officials named on the coins, Olympiodoros and Hekatodoros, seem also to have been mentioned by Polybius. According to Polybius, two men named Olympiodoros and Hekatodoros 'functioned as leaders of the *politeuma* of the Byzantines' (*προέστασαν τοῦ τῶν Βυζαντίων πολιτεύματος*), and were sent to Rhodes as ambassadors before the beginning of the Byzantine-Rhodian War in 221/0.[87]

[84] See Marinescu (1996) 382. For treatments of these officials, cf. von Sallet (1882), and Pick (1895).

[85] Schönert-Geiss I, p. 56 with n. 2.

[86] Seyrig (1968) 186–7; Mørkholm (1991) 146; cf. Schönert-Geiss I, p. 58, who begins the series *c.*250.

[87] Pol. 4.47.4; Schönert-Geiss I, 1016–25, 1037–40, 1191–9, 1240–1. Svoronos (1889) 108–9 was the first to identify the two men with the officials on the coins; cf.

Though they cannot have held the eponymous magistracy simultaneously (dual *hieromnamones* are unknown within Byzantium), it may still be possible to use the coins to identify the two men as eponymous magistrates. Polybius does not say that they were eponymous magistrates; he merely claims that the two men were ambassadors to Rhodes. If the two men are identical with the magistrates on the coins, then rather than holding the office simultaneously, they must have held the office separately but in close proximity, possibly successively, in the years just before or just after the war.[88] In the context in which they are mentioned by Polybius, they are not the chief magistrates, nor necessarily the occupants of any official magistracy, but men with a high level of *auctoritas*, chosen to act as ambassadors. Each held the chief magistracy independently of one another in separate years.

Another means of dating this series is the hoard discovered at Büyükçekmece in 1952, the only hoard discovered so far inside Byzantine territory which contains specimens of these local silver issues (50 tetradrachms of Byzantium and 11 from Chalcedon).[89] It was found about 30 km west of Istanbul, located by a lake at the shore of the Sea of Marmara, just to the west of Küçükçekmece, which corresponds to ancient Rhegion. The hoard is dated by internal criteria to *c.*220 BC or later: its contents include coins of Antiochus Hierax (*c.*241–228/7) which are only slightly worn, suggesting that they had a very short period of use before their burial. It was very likely buried in the uncertain and dangerous context of the Rhodian War.[90] If the Olympiodoros and Hekatodoros of the coins are identifiable with the men mentioned by Polybius, then Thompson's burial date of *c.*220 finds support.

This hoard was the main evidence with which Seyrig worked when originally reconstructing the Bosporus' coinage system. Alongside the silver issues on the reduced local weight, the hoard also contained 108 silver coins on the Attic weight-standard, *c.*16.8g to the tetradrachm (or 4.2 to the drachm). These include tetradrachms and drachms of Alexander the Great, Demetrius Poliorcetes, Philetairoi, Seleucid tetradrachms of Antiochus I, II, and Antiochus Hierax, and posthumous

Head, *HN*[2] 269; Hanell (1934) 156 n. 5; Seyrig (1968) 186–7; Schönert-Geiss I, pp. 56–7.

88 So Schönert-Geiss I, p. 57; see also Seyrig (1968) 186–7.

89 *IGCH* 867; Thompson (1954).

90 So Thompson (1954) 29–30, and Seyrig (1968) 186, 192.

Lysimachi. All of these coins are without exception counter-struck by either Byzantium or Chalcedon; never by both.[91] The countermark used by Byzantium was a prow of a ship adorned by a dolphin, with the city's characteristic ethnic incorporating a variant of the archaic Corinthian beta. Chalcedon's was a bust of Demeter or Apollo, and the first letter of the city's ethnic, kappa. The hoard thus contained both civic coinages on a reduced ('Phoenician') weight, which never bear countermarks, alongside regnal issues which are always without exception stamped by the two cities with countermarks.

Countermarks in antiquity were typically used as a form of revalidation.[92] They might be used to artificially lower the denomination of a particular coin or to equate heavier with lower-weight coins of the same denomination; they might revalidate worn coins, or they might be used to equate old style coins with new issues.[93] As such, countermarks by themselves are not sufficient reason to accept Seyrig's far-reaching reconstruction of the local currency system. However, the care with which the burier of this particular hoard took to ensure that *only* counter-marked Attic-weight coinage was included suggests that in this case countermarks were used to revalidate coinage after it had been demonetized. That is, only local coins or counter-struck Attic coins were acceptable tender in the region. Furthermore, the fact that both cities placed countermarks on these coins, but never both on the same coin, shows that this revalidation policy was a joint one. The cities on either shore of the Bosporus systematically guaranteed the value of their own currencies and used countermarks to revalidate Attic-weight coins.

Following Seyrig's study, it has been generally assumed that both weight-standards, the local-weight issues and the Attic Lysimachi, each minted at local mints, were not in operation simultaneously, but successively. The system is thought to have operated as follows. Byzantium minted posthumous Lysimachi, Attic tetradrachms, throughout the third century, which were thought by Seyrig to have come to an end when the local silver series began. Thus, until *c.*240 or 235, Byzantium used the international Attic standard, but for some reason at this time felt the need to switch to the local issues

[91] Seyrig (1968), esp. 185–6.

[92] On the use of countermarks in antiquity, note Robert (1977) 183–4 n. 84, and Le Rider (1975).

[93] Howgego (1985) 9–13.

on the lower standard. The change coincides with the lead-up to the Rhodian War, and Seyrig thought that the Byzantines were compelled under the pressure of the Galatian tribute to institute a revenue-raising scheme. Byzantium with Chalcedon thus made their local issues the only valid tender within the Bosporus region, encompassing by this point Byzantium's large *peraea*. This established a controlled monetary system which demonetized Attic coinage, banning its use within the region. The cities could then recall Attic coins to be melted down to be used as bullion for lighter, local coinage, profiting from the difference in weight between the two coinages (so Mørkholm). In order to give the mints time to introduce enough local coins into the economy, and to facilitate international traders using the Bosporus who may have preferred the Attic standard, the cities introduced countermarks. On payment of a tax, merchants could have their Attic-standard coins validated for use in the local area by the application of a countermark. By assuming that the Lysimachi ceased in order to accommodate the local Phoenician issues, this makes the revenue raising system a direct response to difficult economic circumstances, limited to the lead-up to the Rhodian War.[94]

In this sense, this measure would be comparable to the emergency measures found in the *Oeconomica* in the fourth century, which were discussed above in Chapter 3.2. Seyrig's picture must, however, be modified in various ways to accommodate the results of Marinescu's die-study of the posthumous Lysimachi and local coinages minted at the Bosporus. His study shows, first, that on the basis of stylistic similarities, the dies of the Lysimachi of Byzantium and Chalcedon were engraved at a single workshop, what Marinescu calls 'the Bosporus workshop', and which was also behind the local 'Phoenician' issues. Moreover, the imitations minted by other cities in the region also used the same Bosporus workshop, which therefore exported its services to various places in the Propontis and Black Sea. Probably it was located at Byzantium itself.[95] Byzantium was therefore the originating point of a regional coinage network; the Bosporus the

[94] So Mørkholm (1982) 298–300, (1991) 146–8, following Seyrig (1968), esp. 186–91, the fundamental treatment. See also Schönert-Geiss I, pp. 62–3, and Thonemann (2008) 49–50 ('The *temporary* introduction of a closed-currency system', my emphasis).

[95] Marinescu (1996) 366–71; on the activities of this Bosporus workshop, see also Marinescu (2004).

centre of its distribution.[96] More importantly, however, the die-study reveals the true extent of the Lysimachi. The Lysimachi were virtually unceasing, beginning in the 260s or possibly even the 270s at Byzantium and continuing until the late second century. Stylistic similarities and die-linkages between Lysimachi in hoards buried in and after the 220s demonstrate that the Lysimachi were continuing to be minted in this decade.[97] Moreover, the Lysimachi share several of their monograms, which refer to the single year in office of a local official, with the local-weight coins, proving that the two series were contemporary.[98] Consequently, they could not have been superseded by the local-weight coins for a period of around fifteen years to meet the specific needs of an emergency.

So far we have seen that two different weight standards were in use at the Bosporus, and that countermarks were placed on Attic coins. Further complicating matters, Byzantium's countermarks (but never Chalcedon's), the city's ethnic inside a 7 mm circle, are also found on Ptolemaic tetradrachms on coins minted at Alexandria from at least the early 260s onwards until the mid-240s (see Fig. 3.4).[99] In Marinescu's study, fifteen separate countermark varieties are identified, demonstrating that these coins were arriving steadily and in large numbers. The Meydancikkale hoard, discovered on the southern coast of Turkey, was buried in the mid-240s, and contains the most recent specimens of these coins, sixty-five silver Ptolemaic tetradrachms which carry Byzantium's ethnic as countermark and monograms which represent city officials.[100] This was also the site of a Ptolemaic

[96] Compare the funerary banquet motifs of the *stelai* found in Byzantium's necropolis. The work of Byzantium's workshops was imitated in the Roman period by cities in the Black Sea between Heraclea and Odessos: Dana (2014) is a detailed treatment of the iconographic representations on these *stelai* and the spread of the motif throughout the Pontus (esp. pp. 357–61); see also Fıratlı-Robert, 44–5, Dana (2011) 154–69, and (2013) 34–5.

[97] Marinescu (1996) 252–323, esp. 323.

[98] Marinescu (1996) 373–4, 392. The most striking correspondence is a monogram which combines omicron and kappa, rendered 'in a very peculiar way, where the drill was employed to add two small holes which were undoubtedly intended to be read as the dashes of the kappa's arms' (Marinescu pp. 381–2). This exact feature is found both on Marinescu no. 41, a Lysimachi reverse, and on Schönert-Geiss I, 1002, one of the reduced weight local issues. As Marinescu observes, the omicron's 'arms' make it clear that the same person carved both designs.

[99] Marinescu (1996) 388–97, and Appendix 4, pp. 463–9 for illustrations of countermark varieties; Davesne and Le Rider (1989) 301–2.

[100] Davesne and Le Rider (1989), esp. 301–2.

Fig. 3.4. Ptolemaic tetradrachm with Byzantine countermark. Tyre, 265/4 BC. 13.95g. Private collection.

fort and garrison in the third century. These coins were phased out *c.*245 or 240, but during their period of use they coexisted with the local-weight silver issues minted by Byzantium and Chalcedon, sharing a similar weight standard with them. As Marinescu's chronology of the Lysimachi shows, the Ptolemaic countermarks coexisted alongside both the Lysimachi and with the local-weight silver issues, and were therefore part of a longer-term, pervasive monetary policy at the Bosporus which lasted for the better part of the third century.[101] The closed-currency system was not limited to the crisis years in the lead-up to the Byzantine-Rhodian War. Instead, it corresponds with the long period in which the Byzantines were forced to pay tribute to the Tylian Kingdom, and was surely intended to raise revenue toward tribute payments this whole time.

Various different currencies must have circulated in the Bosporus, as we saw in the passage from the *Oeconomica*, and the use of countermarks alongside local coins allowed the cities to impose an indirect tax on the exchange of international coinage into locally validated coins. Chalcedon's involvement is clear, and was a necessary pre-requisite for the monopolistic system to function. At precisely the same time, the two cities joined in a formal monetary alliance. There are five series of these alliance coins, minted over the course of the third century, on bronze coins of the 'Phoenician' weight-standard. They begin shortly after the death of Alexander the Great, and extend

[101] Marinescu (1996) 391–2.

Fig. 3.5. Byzantium-Chalcedon alliance coinage, bronze, *c.*300–100 BC. Reverses carry legends with joint ethnics (*BYZAN-KAΛΧΑ*). 8.87g. Heberden Coin Room. With permission of the Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford.

to the end of the third century: magistrates' names show that they were minted alongside the local silver tetradrachms discussed earlier. The ethnics of both cities are given on these coins, confirming that this was a formal monetary alliance—the joint ethnic signifies a *sympoliteia*, which had already been concluded in the late fourth century. Some of these emissions carry types characteristic of Chalcedon: an obverse depicting the head of Athena with Corinthian helm, and a reverse of a cow (Io) standing above an ear of corn, the same symbol minted on Chalcedon's coins in the fifth century. The other emissions signify Byzantium, carrying the same types, monograms, and magistrates' names minted on the local bronze series during this period: the Apollo-trident and Poseidon-prow types (see Fig. 3.5). This coinage is of low denomination, bronze pieces minted on the local standard, and its purpose cannot have been the same as that of the Lysimachi. Unlike them, it was not intended for international trade, but to regulate local transactions. The parallel coinage was used by traders *within* the two cities, permitting citizens of either city to use the joint coinage in either Byzantium or Chalcedon.[102] This envisaged both cities as a single entity, and meant that the inhabitants of the Bosporus did not need to have their coins revalidated for use at the other

[102] The alliance coinage: Schönert-Geiss I, 1252–300, with discussion on pp. 78–80.

city. The two shores of the Bosporus were united under this joint economic policy.

The system imagined in this scenario, created by the combination of local-weight issues and countermarked Attic and Ptolemaic coins, was therefore elaborate and wide in scope. Its existence is supported by the fact that whoever buried the Büyükçekmece hoard was careful to exclude any Attic coins which were not counterstruck and thus revalidated. However, the system's existence hinges on this single hoard, and if another convincing explanation could be found for the countermarks it would affect many of the conclusions about the coinage system which follow. Another strong argument for the existence of the coinage system is the involvement of the Ptolemies, who already possessed experience with their own currency system. It is significant that the local, so-called 'Phoenician' weight-standard on which the local silver coins were minted was in fact very similar to the Lagid weight-standard in Egypt, averaging 13.5 or 14g to the tetradrachm, which was used to create the Ptolemies' own closed-currency system in Egypt.[103] It is likely that the Ptolemies were directly involved and helped to instigate the Bosporus system, and that Egyptians shared their experience of the Ptolemies' own closed-currency system in Egypt with the inhabitants of the Bosporus.[104] In this context, the policy must be seen in light of Ptolemaic interest in Thrace and the north Aegean, and in Ptolemaic concern with trade with the Bosporus and the Black Sea.[105]

As has long been recognized, with the Ptolemaic tetradrachms we are not dealing with coins brought to the Bosporus by individual Egyptian merchants seeking to trade in the region, but with official gifts of cash on a significant scale, almost certainly to be taken in connection with the gift of money mentioned by Dionysius of Byzantium from Ptolemy II, discussed above (Ch. 3.3, pp. 106–07). A connection between the

[103] Le Rider (1971) 151–2, reviewing Schönert-Geiss I, notes the general failure to recognize that the so-called Phoenician standard was identical to the Lagid. Note also Bagnall (1976) 159 n. 1.

[104] Cf. Le Rider (1971) 152: 'les Byzantines, instituant à l'exemple des Ptolémés un monopole monétaire, leur auraient emprunté aussi leur étalon'.

[105] Marinescu (1996) 391, 405–6 views the counterstruck tetradrachms as a form of aid sent from Egypt to Byzantium through official channels, and notes that it may have been intended to permit the Byzantines to create some form of currency-raising system, though he does not explore why the Ptolemies should be so interested in Byzantium's wellbeing.

coinage system and the expansion of Byzantium's overseas territory is therefore likely. The context of this gift is controversial, as we have seen, yet Habicht's argument that it should be connected with the First Syrian War is supported by our Ptolemaic tetradrachms, which show that Ptolemaic money was arriving in Byzantium, where it was counterstruck, from at least the early 260s and probably from the 270s. The original gift, mentioned by Dionysius, was most likely sent at the time of the crossing over of the Galatians in 280/79, and was sustained throughout the following period while Byzantium was compelled to pay tribute to the Galatians at Tylis. Their wide circulation and large extent suggest that the coins were not sent as a one-time occurrence: the bullion was sent over a sustained period of time, compressed into a single gift by Dionysius.[106]

The gift of these coins to Byzantium, beginning at the start of the reign of Ptolemy II, demonstrates official interest in the strait on the part of Egypt. We have also seen that Ptolemy's gift to Byzantium included land in Mysia, which granted to the Byzantines possession of part of their large network of overseas territories. It remains possible to continue to see the coinage system as a local initiative on the part of Byzantium and Chalcedon, as Seyrig did. The Bosporus cities would thus have requested and received outside assistance from Egypt, and the countermarks on the Ptolemaic coins were therefore used to validate foreign coinage and to introduce it into the local economy. Also possible is that the initiative was Egyptian. When Byzantium was besieged and threatened by the Galatians, Ptolemy II saw an opportunity to extend Egyptian influence north to the mouth of the Black Sea, to protect Egyptian mercantile interests in the area from Seleucid encroachment, and to ensure the lasting gratitude of Byzantium. Ptolemy thus began sending Ptolemaic tetradrachms to the city. The Ptolemaic kingdom could afford to send large amounts of silver to the Bosporus because it was already operating precisely the kind of closed-currency system which provided the kingdom with excess bullion. Faced with the sudden influx of large quantities of coins on a different weight-standard to the normal Attic standard, the Byzantines needed to find some way of making the two different weight-standards compatible. These Egyptian tetradrachms were counterstruck and thus revalidated by Byzantium to introduce them to the local economy,

[106] So Bringmann and von Steuben (1995) I, 271, and H.-Chr. Noeske, in Bringmann and von Steuben II.1 (1995) 232–5.

serving alongside the local autonomous silver.[107] Perhaps foreign merchants were obliged to exchange their coinage for the counterstruck Egyptian money or local-weight silver if they wished to trade along the Bosporus. Also possible is that the Ptolemaic coins and local silver were simply valued at the same rate as higher-weight Attic coinage. If so, then in practice Egyptian merchants would have been the only international traders who did not make a loss on the exchange of currency at the Bosporus, and shared the locals' privileged position there. Possibly, however, as with our examination of Athenian involvement in the strait in the fifth century, it is better to imagine a staged process of trial and error, as the Byzantines experimented with different revenue-raising mechanisms at different times. Higher-weight Attic coins could either be melted down and reminted, or (more likely) countermarked and thus revalidated after payment of a tax.[108] Perhaps the Byzantines experimented for a time with a one-to-one exchange, but later resorted to countermarks and the payment of a tax to smooth international trade along the Bosporus. In this way, Byzantium did not succumb to the tributary demands of the Galatians. By granting the city its overseas possessions, the Ptolemies also ensured that this pro-Ptolemaic bloc extended throughout the north and eastern Propontis, and, in return, would guarantee that Ptolemaic trade with the area and the Black Sea remained free from any interference on the part of the Seleucids, Antigonids, or barbarian tribes like the Tylians. The Byzantines, as guardians of the strait, were propped up by the Ptolemies, and their neutrality would prevent the Ptolemies' competitors doing what Athens had done in the fifth century and Philip II had attempted to do in the fourth—shut off the Bosporus and prevent trade between the Black Sea and Egypt.

This mutual arrangement lasted until the 240s, when for some reason the Ptolemaic tetradrachms dried up. Perhaps the agreement with Egypt had come to the end of its fixed term, and the kingdom simply ceased sending coins—the agreement may have been intended as a temporary measure until the Byzantines could produce their own local coins in sufficient quantities. Perhaps the Byzantines hoped to

[107] Marinescu (1996) 391 notes that the Ptolemaic coins would thus have served to increase the supply of local coinage without actually requiring more local coins.

[108] For the mechanisms of exchange, see Marinescu (1996) 407–9. Marinescu doubts (at 394–5) that the coins were valued on a one-to-one basis within the Bosporus, and suggests instead that a tax imposed on revalidating international coinage via countermarks was the principal mechanism of profit.

take full control of their own coinage system by utilizing only locally struck coins, without needing to rely on Ptolemy. Possibly the soaring demands of the Galatians were making it less and less likely that Byzantium could survive, and Egypt withdrew from a bad investment. For whatever reason, this is why the Ptolemies are not listed by Polybius in his account of the Byzantines' potential allies during the Rhodian War: by this point, the Ptolemaic arrangement with the strait had come to an end. Yet without Ptolemaic authority to enforce the system, the Byzantines could not convince merchants to accept this forcible reduction in the value of their coinage—the market would not bear the tariff unless it was required by a Hellenistic king. Perhaps merchants did not mind receiving Ptolemaic coins which they could take away and spend in Egypt, but they did resent the local coins which could not be spent outside the Bosporus or they became frustrated with the tax required at the exchange. They may also have begun to travel around the Bosporus using land routes in order to avoid the tariff. Without Ptolemaic support, the Byzantines could not enforce the system, and in the face of opposition from merchants the system quickly fell apart, leading to the imposition of a direct tax on Pontic trade, a move which the merchants refused to accept, and ultimately to war.

Ptolemy II's motives for aiding the cities of the Bosporus presumably derived primarily from Egyptian mercantile interest in the strait and the Black Sea, which is well attested, and which would have been endangered should Byzantium have succumbed to the Tylians or have joined a rival kingdom. A famous papyrus, dating from 254, records the visit of envoys from the court of King Pairisades II of the Crimean Bosporus to the Ptolemaic court, while other scattered pieces of evidence reveal the spread of Egyptian cults to cities in the Black Sea.[109] One Byzantine, Phormion, was honoured as a friend of Ptolemy.[110] Papyri also outline the close mercantile contacts between Egypt and the Bosporus. The accounts of the expenditures of Zenon's estate detail a quantity of myrrh sent to one Heketodorus, a Byzantine.[111] In another papyrus, Apollonius writes to Zenon asking him for supplies, including Byzantine chick-peas, while in

[109] *P.London* 7, 1973. The evidence for relations between the Ptolemies and the Black Sea has recently been re-examined by Archibald (2007). Note also Dana (2008), esp. 116–17, who connects the medical training at Alexandria of the doctor Herophilos from Chalcedon with this period of friendly relations between the Bosporus and Egypt.

[110] *IG* VII 298.

[111] *P. Cair. Zen.* 1. 59089.20.1, ll. 20–1.

another we read of a Byzantine cleruch, Ammanios, son of Philon, settled in Egypt.[112] In a final papyrus, Kydippos writes to Zenon, asking for *tarichos*, salted fish (a Byzantine staple), for which he will pay him during a trip to Byzantium—for what purpose, we do not know.[113] To smooth this active trade with the strait and the Black Sea, and to protect it from any encroachment by the Seleucids, Ptolemy embarked on a policy of economic imperialism, doing by indirect financial pressure what the Athenians of the fifth century had accomplished by force. No Hellespont Guards were required to maintain this arrangement, only the continued supply of Ptolemaic money.

This unique episode is a peculiar instance of an action taken by minor Greek cities with far-reaching impacts affecting all those who used the Bosporus strait. The monetary policy set up, in effect, a protective sphere over a large region integral to international trade, in which the only valid tender was the local coinage of Byzantium and Chalcedon, or issues systematically revalidated by those cities. Unlike Athens, Byzantium and Chalcedon could not rely on maritime might to force merchants to adhere to an extortion racket; and this may be why their methods of exploiting the Bosporus differed from the Delian League's model of direct taxation and extortion. Instead, they monetized the Bosporus by imposing an indirect protection tariff, accomplishing the same aim without using overt force, but instead falling back on the threat of Ptolemaic interference to prop up the tariff. The policy is paralleled elsewhere, but in very different contexts than at the Bosporus. As Seyrig notes, Ptolemy I replaced the Attic standard with a lighter coinage based on a new Egyptian weight standard. By imposing alongside this a monetary monopoly, in which all non-Egyptian coinage within his kingdom was demonetized, and by enforcing this policy at the currency exchanges, his regime was able to profit from the required exchange to lighter, Egyptian issues. A valuable papyrus preserves the correspondence of Demetrius, probably the master of the mint in Alexandria, to Apollonius, in which Demetrius discusses the purpose of this moneying monopoly.[114] A similar closed-currency system has also traditionally been seen in the Attalid kingdom

[112] *P. Cair. Zen.* 4. 59731 (257–49 BC); *P. Mich.* 18.781.10 (186–5 BC).

[113] *PSI* 4.413.

[114] *P. Cair. Zen.* 59.021 = *Sel. Pap.* II.409, with Seyrig (1968) 190. For the Ptolemaic coinage system, cf. Préaux (1939) 271–5, Robinson in Rostovtzeff, *SEHHW* III, 1635–9, Will (1976–7) I, 175–9, Seyrig (1968) 190, Mørkholm (1982) 297–9, and van Reden (2007) 43–6, with reservations.

of Pergamum, established by Eumenes II following the expansion of his kingdom's territory at the peace of Apameia in 188 BC. This system utilized the 'cistophoric' silver coinage in precisely the same way that the Byzantines over-valued their local-weight silver: the cistophoric coinage was 25 per cent lighter than the Attic drachm, but was artificially overvalued within the Attalid kingdom to enable the exchange of coins at a profit for the state.[115]

In both cases, however, the systems were part of the policy of a Hellenistic kingdom, controlled from the centre and imposed over a large area incorporating numerous mints and territories. By contrast, the Bosporus' system was limited to a relatively small area, organized by two minor *poleis* outside the direct control of any single kingdom, and may have been limited to a single mint. It extended across the Bosporus and the Byzantines' network of overseas possessions, which gave the city control of both shores of the strait, including Chalcedon and its hinterland. Such a system, I suggest, required certain criteria to operate. Either a controlled currency system could only have been established with the oversight of a Hellenistic king in a clearly defined region such as a kingdom, or local circumstances needed to combine to create a 'perfect storm' which prevented merchants from avoiding the tariff without excessive effort on their part (e.g. taking land routes through Asia into the Pontus). Ideally both criteria were present, as at Byzantium. The outside backing offered by the Ptolemies propped up the system with the requisite bullion, while the currents, winds, and nature of the winding, dangerous strait—the sole passage between the Marmara and Pontus—did the job of coercion, allowing the two cities of the Bosporus to cooperate and control the circulation of currency within the region. Unlike in other regions, the cities could rely on the guaranteed flow of silver through the strait, carried by merchants who had no choice but to spend time in local harbours.[116] The controlled monetary system is thus a striking illustration both of the regional

[115] Rostovtzeff, *SEHHW* II, 655–9; Seyrig (1968) 190–1; Kleiner and Noe (1977); Mørkholm (1982) 300–1; Le Rider (1989), (1990); Thonemann (2011) 170–7; but cf. Meadows (2013).

[116] Meadows (2013) 152 notes a basic difference between the Attalid system and those in Egypt and the Bosporus. The Egyptian grain market meant the constant, guaranteed influx of merchants to Egypt, while Byzantium and Chalcedon's position on the Bosporus meant likewise a constant flow of merchants through the strait. Unlike the Pergamene state, in both cases the monetary systems could rely on a guaranteed throughput of silver, because merchants could not simply go elsewhere.

distinctiveness of the Bosporus, and of Robert's observation that powerful cities such as Byzantium or Rhodes, which during the Classical period were controlled and dominated by Persia, Athens, or Sparta, enjoyed new opportunities in the Hellenistic period to embark on their own independent policies, to wield the kind of influence that only Athens or Sparta had previously possessed, and to enjoy the economic benefits which went with that new freedom.

4

The Bounty of the Bosporus

> Having bridged the fish-haunted seas of the Bosporus,
> Mandrocles offered this gift to Hera in memory of his work.
> Having won a crown for himself, and fame for the Samians,
> doing the will of King Darius.[1]

> Bounties of fish distinguish Marseilles, Tarentum, and Venice; but the Bosporus excels them all; for it is to here just as a gateway of two seas that the fish pass habitually in the autumn and in the spring. In this way they follow the same fixed law of nature (*certa lege naturae*) by which the cranes are accustomed to fly twice a year through the Mediterranean. Such is the multitude that it is possible on their arrival to catch a great number, not only for the fishermen themselves but even for those who are untrained in fishing (*totius piscationis rudes*), to such an extent that even children and women are able to fish from their homes, throwing down baskets from their windows into the sea.[2]

To the ancient writers, and modern travellers like Gilles, the Bosporus was a fisherman's paradise. Mandrocles of Samos, who bridged the Bosporus for Darius, chose *ἰχθυόεντα*, 'fish-haunted', as an appropriate epithet for the strait. Archestratus called Byzantium the 'metropolis of tuna' (*θυννίδος μητρόπολις*), while Ps.-Hesiod called her the mother of seasonal tunny (*ὡραίων θυνναίων μήτηρ*), deep-sea mackerel, and well-fed swordfish.[3] This association between the Bosporus and fish is ubiquitous in the sources.[4] Several themes consistently recur. It

[1] Hdt. 4.88.2.
[2] Pierre Gilles, *De Bosporo Thracio*, Pref. 4 (Grélois p. 63).
[3] Athen. 3.116b–c (Ps.-Hesiod); 7.303e (Archestratus).
[4] Tac. *Ann.* 12.63; Strab. 7.6.2; Arist. *Pol.* 1291b; Pliny, *HN* 9.15; Dio Chrys. *Or.* 33.24–5; 35.23; Horace, *Sat.* 2.4.63–6; Stat. *Silv.* 4.9, 13; Philostr. *Im.* 1.13; Nicostratus F 4, 5 (Edmonds); Antiphanes F 77 (Edmonds); Ael. *NA* 9.42; Preger, *IGM* 7. Hom. *Il.* 9.364 refers not to the Bosporus but to the Hellespont: see Tekin (1994) 473. There

was believed that the Byzantines' wealth in fish derived from shoals of tunny and mackerel, whose seasonal migrations were directed by the currents of the strait. These same currents were thought to have ensured an abundance of fish in Byzantium, but a scarcity in Chalcedon: Pliny the Elder, Tacitus, and Strabo all note that, just as they drove ships into the Golden Horn, enabling the taxation of Pontic trade, the currents also drove fish away from the Asiatic coast toward Europe, and they mention a large white rock on the Asiatic side near Chalcedon, which they believed startled the tunny and directed them toward the fishing grounds of Europe.[5] The surplus, it was thought, was exported in the form of processed (salted or pickled) fish: Horace mentions Byzantine jars which contained a key ingredient for fish sauce (*garum*), *muria*. Menander, we saw in Chapter 1.1, had his characters recall a trip to Byzantium by reference to the number of fish there ('fat old men, fish by the boatload, a life to make you sick!').[6] This trait defined the national character, and was woven into the fabric of the regional identity: there were so many fish in the Bosporus that the Byzantines were supposedly all fat, clammy, and full of phlegm.[7] The very smell of pickled fish recalled Byzantium's fish market and its exported fish produce, which consisted of pungent pickled and salted fish.[8] It was perhaps this smell which Stratonicus was evoking when he referred to the city as the 'armpit of Greece'.[9]

Istanbul today possesses a vibrant fish market, which is busiest at the times of the annual migrations in autumn and spring.[10] Though overfishing has today reduced the population of tunny passing through the strait, other species of migratory fish still follow the ancient pattern, and vast catches of fresh fish grace Istanbul's market.

are over twenty references to Byzantine fish in Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistae* (cf. Athen. 3.117b, 118b, e; 7. 278c, 314e, 320b). The evidence of Dionysius of Byzantium will be discussed separately. On these literary sources, cf. Dumont (1976–77) 100 with n. 25.

[5] For Chalcedon's own fishing industries, note Aul. Gell. *Noct. Att.* 6.16.5.

[6] Cf. Arist. *Pol.* 1291b, a passage which equates the Byzantines' democracy with their large numbers of fishermen.

[7] Athen. 4.132e.

[8] Note Stat. *Silv.* 4.9, 13: *Byzantios olent lacertos.* Thompson, D'Arcy (1937) identifies the Byzantine *lacertos* as the Spanish mackerel, which when pickled produces a notoriously pungent odour.

[9] Athen. 8.351c.

[10] See the figures given in Deveciyan (1926) Table A, which give the quantity of fish produce sold in Istanbul between 1909 and 1923, broken down according to species.

Drawing primarily on the numerous ancient literary sources, the ancient Byzantine economy has been reconstructed by previous scholars as one based primarily on its active fishing industry. In 1977 Jacques Dumont, in his treatment of Byzantium's tunny fishing, argued that fishing was the principal economic activity of Hellenistic Byzantium, generating large revenues from state contracts and the export of processed fish.[11] Faced with such large potential profits, and as an indicator of just how important it was to the local economy, the *polis* took the extraordinary step of making fishing a state monopoly in order to tax the industry and lease out fishing contracts.[12]

This traditional view of Byzantium's fishing industry has been influential. The region's reputation for fishing has often been invoked to explain numerous local coin types. Representations of Poseidon, dolphins, tridents, and other symbols of the sea such as prows of boats on coins are invariably taken as confirming the city's self-identification as a harbour-city, evoking the wealth it derived from maritime traffic, tolls, and its fishing industries. The tunny itself appears on the coins, while on a few coins from the Roman period there appears a 'biconical object', variously identified as a torch, connected to the worship of the goddess Phosphorus, a fish trap, or, tentatively, as a buoy used to keep large nets connected to fishing installations afloat (see Figs. 4.1 and 4.2).[13] The coins discussed in Chapter 1.2, which depict an ox standing above a dolphin, are, according to this view, representations of the dual nature of Byzantium's

[11] Dumont (1976–77) 100 and *passim.* The view is accepted by Tekin (1994), who claims, at p. 474, that 'one of the main if not most important source of income was the pelamys and tunny'. Nixon and Price (1990) 153 suggest that these revenues were the basis for Byzantium's large tribute payments to the Delian League. For similar sentiments, cf. Isaac (1986) 216, Tozeren (2009) 43–4 and 247–9, Dagron (1995), Curtis (1991) 119–26, Rostovtzeff, *SEHHW* II, 591, III 1177–8, Merle (1916) 67, and Newskaja (1955) 29, 48–9.

[12] See Chapter 4.3.

[13] Schönert-Geiss, 979–1142, 1244–50, 1301–8, 1430, 1677, 1779–84, 1805, 1977–91 (Poseidon); 1313–14, 1334–47, 1353–4, 1357–8, 1385, 1387–91, 1393–8, 1641–3, 1668–9, 1761–3, 1788, 2032–71; 750–856, 871–922, 932–50 (a dolphin and trident); 1309–12, 1347–81, 1414–15 (tuna); 1329, 1343–4, 1366–8, 1382, 1400–1, 1404–5, 1410–11, 1444–6, 1462–5, 1506–7, 1510, 1634–5, 1657, 1707–9, 1715–21, 1721, 1724–5, 1757–9, 1794, 1799–1801, 1820–3, 1830, 1900–6 (torch or fish-trap). For interpretations of the 'biconical objects', cf. Tekin (1994) 478 (buoy), *BMC Thrace* 65, 80–2 (fish trap), Schönert-Geiss II, p. 36 (torch). For the interpretation of these coin types as symbols of Byzantium's maritime economy, cf. Schönert-Geiss I, p. 75 and II, p. 33, Tekin (1994), Rostovtzeff, *SEHHW* II, 591, III 1177–8, and Newskaja (1955) 29–30.

Fig. 4.1. Tunny fish coin type, Byzantium. 8.86g. Heberden Coin Room. With permission of the Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford.

Fig. 4.2. 'Conical object'. Byzantium. 13.77g. Heberden Coin Room. With permission of the Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford.

economy: agricultural and maritime.[14] However, as argued there, these coins may also be interpreted as mythological allusions intended to evoke Byzantium's connection with the Bosporus. In the same manner, the representations on local coins of Poseidon, the lover of Io's daughter Ceroessa and the father of Byzas, need have nothing at all to do with sea-based economic activities, but are equally likely to be references to Byzantium's legendary history, which, we have seen, was closely woven into the city's local identity. Whatever

[14] Cf. especially Schönert (1966).

the case, the representation of fish on coins was an extremely common practice in the Pontic and Propontic regions, and was done at Cyzicus, Karkinitis, Chersonesus, Panticapaeum, Sinope, and Heraclea.[15] Fish on Byzantine coins says nothing specific about the local economy except that, as a part of the Pontic region, the city shared in the Black Sea's reputation for productive fishing industries. The coins alone cannot be used to support the view that the regional economy of the Bosporus revolved around fishing.

In fact there are several problems with the traditional view which require it to be revised or, at least, refined. Firstly, it is almost entirely dependent on literary sources. Ancient references to Byzantine fish by non-Byzantine authors do not constitute evidence that Byzantium's economy was based on fishing; they show only that Byzantium was *perceived* by outsiders as being rich in fish, whether it was in reality or not. Likewise, whatever way we choose to interpret the local coins, they do not provide evidence of a vibrant fishing economy. As we have seen, the Byzantines knowingly emphasized certain features of their local identity: their close connection with the Bosporus strait, the role played by the city in maintaining freedom of shipping, or the strait's role in the Argonautic saga. There were practical benefits in doing this, because it allowed Byzantium to legitimize its monopolistic control over the region, and to generate revenue from the taxation of shipping. In the same manner, it was advantageous for the Byzantines to portray their city as a fisherman's paradise in order to attract merchants to their own fish markets.

An additional issue created by Byzantium's position on the Bosporus is that we must draw a distinction between fish *caught* in Byzantium and the surrounding region, and fish which were *sold* there. In Polybius' description of Byzantium, which he depicts as an ideal trading city, the Byzantines earned their reputation as benefactors by guaranteeing the transit of necessities and luxuries through the strait.[16] None of these good things came *from* Byzantium, they came *via* it ('the Pontus, therefore, being rich in what the rest of the world requires'). Despite the fact that these items were produced within the Black Sea, the Byzantines reaped the credit of acting as benefactors to the rest of Greece because their city acted as hub which facilitated exchange between Greece and the Pontus. Consequently, it

[15] An overview of the types can be found in Stolba (2005).

[16] Pol. 4.38.

is possible that many of the references to Byzantine fish in the literary sources actually refer to fish caught and salted in the Pontus but sold at Byzantium.

David Braund has argued that this was done in a conscious attempt to 'Hellenize' the fish trade. The world beyond Byzantium, the Black Sea, was viewed, as we shall see in Chapter 5, as ethnically different to the rest of Greece; an uncivilized place, it was populated by dangerous Scythian nomads and Thracian tribes, whatever the truth of the Hellenic identity of Greek cities within the Pontus. Byzantium, the last Greek city before this different, hostile world opened up beyond the Bosporus, acted according to Polybius as a bastion of Hellenic culture, protecting Greek traders from the piratical attacks of non-Greeks in the Black Sea by guaranteeing their safe passage through the Bosporus. As Braund notes, while there are twenty references to fish from Byzantium in Athenaeus, there is only a single reference to fish from any other specific city inside the Black Sea, suggesting that much of the fish produced in and exported from the Pontus was conflated with 'Byzantine' fish.[17] Consequently, he argues, 'It seems that Greek writers tended to describe the produce of a multiplicity of half-known locations around the Black Sea as "Byzantine".'[18] Something similar, we shall see, occurred in the west along the Strait of Gibraltar at the city of Gades. Yet Braund's point does not preclude the existence of a vibrant local fishing scene at Byzantium itself; it merely suggests that the productivity of such an industry may be exaggerated by the sources. In one papyrus from Egypt, Kydippos writes to Zenon, asking for *tarichos*, salted fish, for which he will pay him during a trip to Byzantium.[19] Was Kydippos asking for fish caught and salted at Byzantium itself, or was he writing shorthand in reference to Pontic fish sold at Byzantium? We cannot know, but if the papyrus refers to fish caught in the Pontus but sold at Byzantium, it shows that the practice of conflating Pontic with Byzantine fish was not limited to literary circles, or done only for ideological reasons.

While this problem relates to ideological issues with our sources, another problem arises from statistical analysis. In *A Fisherman's Tale*, his influential minimalist treatment of ancient fishing, Gallant

[17] The single reference is to the mullet of Sinope: Athen. 7.307b.
[18] Braund (1995), at 167. [19] *PSI* 4.413.

argued that to calculate the true importance of fishing to the ancient economy we cannot put stock in qualitative literary sources, but must rely instead on quantitative analysis.[20] Ancient fishing techniques, he claimed, were incapable of producing catches large enough for a community to subsist on, let alone export at a profit, and as a consequence fishing may have been enough to supplement the diet of a fisherman and his family, but no more. Moreover, he argued that, statistically, the Mediterranean is an unproductive sea, and the calorific potential of average quantities of fish caught in modern times is insufficient to fulfil the requirements of even small populations. A city like Byzantium relying on the exported surplus of its catches would be impossible in this model.

Though influential, Gallant's thesis is no longer widely accepted, and various problems with his broad-stroke approach have been raised.[21] The modern statistics utilized by Gallant must be approached with greater caution. Nature is not constant; ecosystems change over time, due to pollution or due to the impact of overfishing, and fishing on an industrial level, which has taken place in the Mediterranean and Black Sea from the 1950s and 1960s onward, has drastically reduced the productive potential of both seas.[22] Modern statistics can be used as indicators of potential productivity, but they do not tell the whole story, and are useless as evidence for the ancient world until they are contextualized alongside ancient evidence. For the purposes of this chapter, the greatest issue with the minimalist view is that it pays insufficient attention to local circumstances. As Purcell notes, while the Mediterranean is generally poor, there is great variation in salinity and depth from area to area, and there is a huge variety of habitats. In certain local circumstances, such as inland lakes and lagoons, the mouths of lakes which connect to the sea, marshes, or enclosed straits where migratory fish pass in shoals, such as Gibraltar,

[20] Gallant (1985). He notes, at p. 12, that evaluating the importance of fishing from statements in Greek comedy is like 'arguing that spam is one of the staples of the diet in this country and citing Monty Python as evidence'.

[21] Mylona (2008) 9–11 is a useful recent critique of Gallant, which calls the view 'axiomatic'. In fact it has not been axiomatic for some time: cf. Purcell (1995) 138, Horden and Purcell (2000) 194–6, 576 ('unhelpfully minimalist assessment'), Jacobsen (2005), Wilkins (2005) 25–6, Lytle (2006) 45–52, 98–104, Bresson (2008) I, 184–5, 193, Boardman (2011), and Marzano (2013) 351.

[22] Jacobsen (2005) 98–9 and *passim* for an overview of the statistical issues with Gallant's approach; on the problem of overfishing, see Lytle (2006) 101–3 and Ellis (2003).

the Hellespont, and the Bosporus, there is much higher potential productivity.[23] The ancients themselves recognized that fishing varied dramatically from area to area, and Galen and Athenaeus are each careful to cite the location from whence the fish products they discuss came—the variety of locations mentioned by Athenaeus are testament to the extreme variability of ancient fishing. This is why certain areas, like Spain or the Pontus, were more famous than others for their fish, because conditions varied so drastically from region to region.

A final potential problem with the traditional view of Byzantium's fishing industry is that it does not give sufficient recognition to the seasonability of fishing in the Bosporus. As we shall see, the tunny for which Byzantium was famous was a migratory fish, one which passed through the strait in huge numbers several times a year: the epithet used by Ps.-Hesiod to describe Byzantine tunny is *ὡραίων*, 'peak-season'. The surplus generated at seasonal intervals by these predictable migrations could generate windfalls. But would Byzantium's fishermen concentrate on fishing all year round when the efficient shore-based installations fell into disuse and they had to resort to traditional boat-based practices? Presumably, many of the workers who operated shore-based fishing installations were seasonal workers, who used tunny migrations to supplement their regular income. The rich agricultural side of Byzantium's economy is repeatedly evoked by the local inscriptions, much more often than the Bosporus' fishing industries. For example, a dedication to Zeus Enaulios was set up by a man called Heris, 'having prayed on behalf of his *thremmata* (*εὐξάμενος ὑπὲρ τῶν θρεμμάτων*)'.[24] This inscription was found in Boyalık, east of the village of Çatalca, which lies between Terkoz (anc. Lake Delkos) and Küçükçekmece (anc. Rhegion), an area which constituted part of the European *chora* of Byzantium. The area, Robert notes, is flat and fertile, lying outside the forests which occupy much of the European side of Istanbul's peninsula, with good opportunities for farming, precisely where we should expect to find some evidence of Byzantium's pastoral economy. Enaulios as an epithet for Zeus is unknown elsewhere, and its meaning is unclear.[25] A clue is found in the word *θρεμμάτων*: Robert noted that *thremmata* could refer to children, small animals like goats or sheep, or cows.[26] It is probable that the dedicator was a shepherd, invoking Zeus Enaulios as the

[23] Purcell (1995) 138. [24] *IByz* 20. [25] Łajtar, *IByz*, pp. 51–2.
[26] Robert (1955) 33–7; cf. s.v. LSJ: 'nurseling', 'creature', 'of animals'.

protector of the land and the flocks.[27] A similar dedication from Selymbria shows a farmer (γεωργὸς), called Posidonis (*sic*), dedicating honours to a local hero on behalf of his cattle or sheep (τῶν κτηνέων).[28] Both inscriptions serve as reminders that European Thrace, Byzantium's *chora*, though mountainous and, allegedly, ravaged regularly by Thracian tribes, housed the majority of Byzantium's population, who earned their living from the land. Some of those men like Heris might have supplemented this with fishing in peak season for a few weeks, but their principal activity consisted in agriculture and livestock breeding. While we possess good epigraphic evidence of this agricultural activity, we have no such inscriptions relating to Byzantium's fishing industries save the indirect allusions to fishing in a series of dedications to Dionysus Parabolos, discussed further below (Chapter 4.1, pp. 148–50).[29]

In this chapter I investigate the Bosporus' local fishing industries, and consider whether these new perspectives give us reason to reconsider what Dumont wrote in 1977. Just how important was fishing to the regional economy? Furthermore, how much of Byzantium's economic prosperity was owed to locally caught and processed fish, and how much relied on fish caught elsewhere but sold at Byzantium? The evidence for this topic is extremely problematic, and it is next to impossible to give quantifiable answers to either question. The local evidence of Dionysius of Byzantium is afforded a privileged position, because although it is affected by local patriotism, the detailed information provided by Dionysius about specific fishing sites along the Bosporus, which corresponds well with modern data, offers a local

[27] So Łajtar, *IByz* p. 52, following Robert; cf. A. Chaniots, *SEG* L 664: 'a patron of the breeding of livestock in the context of the pastoral economy and the seasonal movement of livestock'.

[28] *IByz* S 17.

[29] Other local inscriptions relate to Byzantium's agricultural economy. One Herm, *IByz* 13, is dedicated 'To the Good Daimon, Good Fortune, The Fine Time, The Rainy Winds, to the Spring, the Summer, the Autumn, and the Winter' (Ἀγαθῷ Δαίμονι/Ἀγαθῇ Τύχῃ/Καλῷ Καιρῷ/Ὄμβροις Ἀνέμοις/Ἔαρι Θέρει/Μετοπώρῳ/Χειμῶνι). These are personifications of the seasons and the elements: the dedicant was concerned with his land, and was asking that they keep evils away—hence the invocation of the winds. See Łajtar's comments on p. 43, and cf. Robert (1950) 56–66; J. and L. Robert, *BE* 1951: 148; Robert (1974) 232 n. 31. Byzantium's territory in Mysia (cf. Chapter 3.3) was likewise fertile, and was perhaps acquired partly for its productivity. *IApameia* 115–16 reveal the existence of an association of Brontistai, devotees of Zeus Brontaios, who was honoured in Phrygia as a fertility god connected to the protection of fruit-bearing land: *MAMA* 5, 12–16; cf. *INikaia* 1080–105, 1504, 1507–11; *IKyzikos* 5, with Corsten (1987) 121, citing these examples.

perspective differing from that of outsiders like Polybius or Athenaeus. Modern statistics too are dangerous for the reasons mentioned above (p. 139), and there is virtually no archaeological evidence from Istanbul connected to ancient fishing. The sites along the Bosporus used for fixed-nets installations, the modern *voli* and madragues, have been in use continually for the last two thousand years, eradicating all traces of ancient installations. Consequently, the chapter takes a comparative approach by examining archaeological evidence from cities and fishing installations in the Black Sea and the Strait of Gibraltar, and using estimates of their potential capacity and productivity to gain some insight into the potential productivity of the Bosporus itself. If, as Horden and Purcell argue, the Mediterranean was a 'continuum of discontinuities', comprised of micro-regions which each differed dramatically from one another, what set the Bosporus' fishing grounds apart from those of other regions? To answer this question, this chapter explores those local features which made possible a lucrative regional fishing industry. The various bays and indentations of the strait which trap fish and serve as the sites of *voli*, the nature of tunny migrations, the currents and winds, and the productivity of local inland lakes and lagoons are all taken into consideration, because it was these features which set the Bosporus apart.

4.1 LOCAL VARIABILITY AND SEASONAL FISHING

In Horden and Purcell's Mediterranean Sea, a sea composed of a huge variety of habitats and fishing grounds, regions which are typically unproductive in fish coexist alongside regions with a much higher potential productivity. In such places, fishing was naturally organized to a much higher degree in order to maximize efficiency and productivity. Even those areas which did not typically profit from fishing might occasionally enjoy a rare and unpredictable windfall.[30] If migratory shoals were known to pass through an area their arrival could be predicted. Sites along migratory routes, like the Bosporus, the Dardanelles, Gibraltar, islands along the coast of western Turkey,

[30] Horden and Purcell (2000) 194–5; see also Boardman (2011).

the channel between Sicily and Italy, or the Aegean islands, could transform these shoals into a consistent source of income. Ancient Iasos, for example, was one such area where, according to Strabo, the people gained most of their revenue from fishing.[31] At Istros in the Pontus, a local inscription attests that the Istrians derived 'just about all of their revenues from the salting of fish'.[32] The scale of fishing activity differed dramatically from region to region because of local features.

The chief characteristic of fishing in the Bosporus is that it operates according to a seasonal rhythm, in tune with the migrations of fish passing through the strait. In March and April, the tunny, mackerel, bonito and other species of migratory fish pass into the Black Sea seeking mating grounds.[33] The young tuna spawn in the Black Sea in the summer around Lake Maeotis, and, according to Strabo, they gain in size and strength as they travel south along the Pontic coast. Still not fully mature, they pass back into the Mediterranean in November where they spend the winter, and return to the Black Sea in the spring.[34] These regular migrations, which Gilles claimed operate according to a 'definite law of nature', create brief periods several times a year when shoals of migrating fish can be caught with great ease, even, according to Gilles, by the uninitiated—women and children. Peak-season tunny pass through the strait in spring around March/April, at the start of summer around July/August, and in winter in December/January. Each of these periods can last up to two months, with up to four weeks of very intensive fishing when the fish pass through the strait in bulk.[35] It is clear that the ancients were just as aware of these seasonal fluctuations as Turkish fishermen are today. Strabo gives the following description of the migratory habits of tunny:

> Now these fish are hatched in the marshes of Lake Maeotis, and when they have gained a little strength they rush out through the mouth of the lake in schools and move along the Asian shore as far as Trapezus and

[31] Strab. 14.2.21.

[32] *ISM* I 68.20–2: [*ἔλεγε σχεδὸν*] *ἐκείνην μόνην εἶναι τῆς πόλεως πρόσο*[*δον τὴν ἐκ τοῦ*] *ταρειχευομένου ἰχθύος*.

[33] For the species of fish present in the Bosporus, cf. von Hammer I (1822) 46, and Dumont (1976–77) 101–4.

[34] Modern accounts of the migrations: Dumont (1977) 103–5; Dagron (1995) 57–8; Curtis (1991) 149; Mylona (2008) 43; Tekin (1994) 471–2; Marzano (2013) 67–8.

[35] See Dagron (1995) 57–8 and Dumont (1976–7) 104–05; cf. Strab. 7.6.2 and Arist. *HA* 9.17.

> Pharnacis. It is here that the catching of the fish first takes place, though the catch is not considerable, for the fish have not yet grown to their normal size. But when they reach Sinope, they are mature enough for catching and salting. Yet when once they touch the Cyaneae and pass by these, the creatures take such fright at a certain white rock which projects from the Chalcedonian shore that they forthwith turn to the opposite shore. There they are caught by the current, and since at the same time the region is so formed by nature as to turn the current of the sea there to Byzantium and the Horn at Byzantium, they naturally are driven together thither and thus afford the Byzantines and the Roman people much revenue.[36]

It is precisely the seasonal nature of this activity which causes the huge variation displayed in Karekin Deveciyan's statistical overview of the monthly value of seafood sold in Istanbul over the period 1915 to 1923. Even on a month-to-month basis within the same year, the numbers of tunny (Turk. *orkinos*) sold vary dramatically in connection with these migratory movements. In March and April 1915, a total of 27,191 and 22,894 kgs respectively of tunny were sold at Istanbul, but over the following two months this fell to 1,442 and 5,819 kgs before rising back to comparably high levels in July and August. After August, the figures once again fall to low levels before climbing back to 16,270 and 10,128 kgs in December and January. Similar but not identical patterns are observable every year between 1915 and 1923.[37] Migrations therefore cause substantial variation even within a single region, and this variation could be predicted and exploited; the regional economy could adapt to the rhythm of seasonal fishing. Gallant's approach to ancient fishing overlooks the existence of such regions, choosing to use average figures for the entire Mediterranean or Pontus over long (fifty-year) periods. Commodities like fish might have been rare in many regions but they were extremely common in places like the Bosporus, and when they were fitted into exchange with the rest of the Mediterranean they could be sold at a price far above their purely nutritional value.[38]

Our archaeological evidence from Istanbul does not permit us to gain an accurate picture of the size of the industry which these

[36] Strab. 7.6.2 (transl. Leonard Jones, Loeb). Similar ancient accounts of the migratory habits of tunny: Op. *Hal.* 1.595–636; Plin. *HN* 9.50.

[37] Deveciyan (1926) Table B.

[38] Noted by Horden and Purcell (2000) 195. On variability: Mylona (2008) 37, 43.

migrations sustained, but comparative evidence from an analogous region does permit a relative reconstruction of the scale of local fishing. Along the Strait of Gibraltar, tunny, mackerel, swordfish, eels, and other migratory fish follow a similar seasonal rhythm: every year the fish pass from the Atlantic through the narrow (14 km wide) strait to breed in the warmer western Mediterranean, and return to the Atlantic through the strait later in the year. In more recent times, huge madragues, coastal installations used to catch shoaling fish, operated along the strait, and the region alone was once responsible for 30 per cent of total Spanish fish production.[39] Even the currents in the strait function like those of the Bosporus, directing the fish on their annual migrations. Like Byzantium, Spain, but particularly Gades (mod. Cadiz) at the western entrance to the strait, was renowned in antiquity for its fish.[40] Yet unlike Istanbul, archaeological finds in Spain and Morocco, mainly in zones no longer occupied, have uncovered remains of numerous installations sited along both shores of the strait which salted and processed fish caught by onshore installations. These extend from Lisbon on the Atlantic coast to Rhode in the Mediterranean. This material evidence validates what the ancients claimed about the Spanish fishing industry. Numerous processing installations along the strait, which operated mainly during the Roman period up to the sixth century AD, were sited in order to best exploit the shoals of migrating fish.[41] Of 120 such installations discovered throughout the western Mediterranean, forty-eight are concentrated along the Strait of Gibraltar, illustrating the extent to which much of the Mediterranean's fishing activity was clustered around small, extremely productive areas.[42] The sheer scale of this industry also illustrates the potential productivity of such a region. The largest installation found so far, at Lixus in Morocco on the Atlantic coast, possessed ten factories with a capacity of over 1,000 cubic metres.[43] Our best-preserved example, Baelo (mod. Bolonia), possessed two separate processing installations, one outside the city and another within. The first possessed six separate groups of

[39] Ponsich and Tarradell (1965) 5.

[40] E.g. Plin. *HN* 9.49 (mentioning the migratory habits of fish in the western Mediterranean) and Strab. 3.2.7, 4.2.

[41] On the archaeological evidence for fish processing in Spain, see Ponsich and Tarradell (1965), esp. 81–90, Curtis (2005) 37–8, Curtis (1991) 46–64, and Trakadas (2005), esp. 51–7.

[42] See Curtis (1991) Figures 7 and 9.

[43] Curtis (2005) 38.

salting vats, while the latter had two groups of six and nine salting vats, linked by a central room for fish preparation.[44] At such places where shoals of migratory fish could be exploited, fishing evolved from a small-scale, inefficient economic activity to a truly industrial level.

The evidence from Gibraltar also echoes one of the problems with our literary sources for the Bosporus. Most of the references to fish from this region refer not to 'Spanish' fish, but fish from Gades. It appears that the fish produced by the entire region came to be associated with one spot, Gades. Near Cadiz, the remains of four salting installations have been discovered dating from the late fifth century to *c.*200 BC. These have been identified as processing installations by discoveries of fish bones and other organic debris. One preserves physical remains: a room for the cleaning and preparation of fish, a fermentation room, amphorae, etc.[45] Gades, therefore, did indeed possess a significant fishing and salting industry; however, it was merely one site in a much larger network: the largest installations along Gibraltar were at Lixus, Baelo, New Carthage, and Carteia. Ponsich thought that in Morocco and Spain, a consortium monopolized the fishing industry, treating the two regions as a single economic unit. They sent all processed fish to Gades where it would be exported, earning it the name Gaditian. A society of fishermen at Gades dominated this trade, which is why we hear very little of salteries other than Gades.[46] The suggestion, as Curtis notes, is unproven: large societies at Gades might have played an important role in the export of processed fish, but this is not necessarily the same thing as a monopoly.[47] However, the possibility parallels the situation at the Bosporus imagined by Braund, in which Byzantium acted as a bulking point where fish caught and processed within the Black Sea came to be bought or reshipped. Like at Gades, there might have existed consortia of Byzantine fishermen who exercised pseudo-monopolistic control over the Bosporus fish markets, and ensured that Pontic produce would be exported from Byzantium. Yet the initiative was local, and does not need to be explained, as Braund does, in ideological terms, as an attempt by outsiders to 'Hellenize' the fish trade. Dionysius of Byzantium shows that Byzantium's possession of the best Bosporus fishing grounds was a matter of local

[44] Curtis (1991) 51–4; cf. Trakadas (2005) 56–7.
[45] Trakadas (2005) 48.
[46] Ponsich (1970) 336, and (1975) 670–9.
[47] Curtis (1991) 62.

patriotism. After describing over twenty productive fishing grounds in Byzantium's *chora* in Europe, he comes to the place named Katangeion, in Asia. This gulf, he claims, 'is well-endowed with fish like no other, but really, if I were to speak plainly and leave nothing out, it is the only shore of the Chalcedonians which can be called well-endowed with fish'.[48] The local rivalry outlined in Chapter 1.2, which contested the local mythologies of the Bosporus, extended to the strait's fishing grounds.

Dionysius' *Anaplous* constitutes another kind of evidence for the productivity of the Bosporus' fishing grounds. The treatise shows that the perception that Byzantium was rich in fish was not one confined to outside observers hoping to 'Hellenize' a Pontic fish trade, but that locals like Dionysius took pride in their knowledge of individual spots along the Bosporus which were especially productive in fish. As we saw in Chapter 1, this treatise is not easily classifiable: it is not truly a navigational treatise, but closer to 'patriotic geography'—that is, Dionysius dwells on local details and myths unknown to the outside world, but which were key components of the regional identities of communities along the Bosporus, in an attempt to bring these details to a wider audience.[49] Given this, the amount of time devoted in the *Anaplous* to fishing is remarkable. Evidently, this activity was something which was closely associated with the Byzantine character, and was something that the locals were proud of. Throughout the treatise, Dionysius takes care to note every single locality (in Europe, at least) along the Bosporus where fishing was an important economic activity. Around twenty individual spots are mentioned, and in some cases Dionysius explains how the etymology of the place's name was connected to its fishing. Bathea Skopia, 'The Deep Watcher', is explained by Dionysius by the depth of the gulf into which the fish swim. Skopia is left unexplained, but it is possible to infer that it derived from the existence of a tunny watchtower, a *skopeia*, here. The place named *Φαιδαλία*, which shared its name with Byzas' wife, was named, according to Dionysius, after the appearance of fish here (as Grélois explains, the name might have arisen from a combination of *phanein*, 'to appear', and *halieia*, 'fishing': p. 153 n. 810). Bathykolpos, 'The Deep Gulf', was named not because of the depth of the beach, but after the

[48] Dion. Byz. 98. The passage survives only in Gilles' Latin paraphrase.
[49] On Dionysius as a 'patriot', cf. Dan (2008) at www.ehw.gr.

depth of the sea—here, claims Dionysius, there was a fishing emplacement, which caught fish 'as they come and go in shoals'.[50]

Dionysius' testimony accords well with the modern situation. In his treatment of the Bosporus fishing industries in the early part of the twentieth century, Karekin Deveciyan mapped out all the sites in the Bosporus which utilized madragues (Turk. *dalyanlar*), and *voli* (Greek *boloi*), sites at which beach seines operated. In the 1920s, there were thirty-eight full-scale *madragues*, and over eighty smaller beach seines.[51] Only one site on the Asiatic coast, Katangeion, mentioned previously, appears in Dionysius, though as Deveciyan's map illustrates, the Asiatic coast was just as productive as the European.[52] This is likely to have been due to local patriotism on the part of Dionysius, but despite this, his detailed description of individual spots shows that, whatever the merits of Braund's argument that much of Byzantine fish was technically 'Pontic' fish, communities along the Bosporus did and do enjoy a highly productive fishing industry, rooted in these local circumstances.

One of these fishing spots may be used to explain a difficult inscription relating to a curious cult of Dionysus at Byzantium. About halfway up the Bosporus, near the fortress of Rumeli Hisarı, is a place named Parabolos. Dionysius claims that this location was 'named because of the danger involved in hunting fish here. For as you pass down into this unprotected, naked and rocky shore of the sea, the current deceives you as if truthfully it gives forth wild fish along the narrow part of the shore'.[53] The area is in fact extremely rich in fish, but the notorious 'Devil's Current' here makes catching them difficult. Parabolos corresponds with the modern Bebek, where Deveciyan locates a madrague and several *voli*. Dethier describes how the fishermen at Bebek avoid the dangerous current by awaiting the shoals of fish on tall perches, then signalling to the operators of the coastal installation to raise the nets from the shore.[54]

This area should be associated with two local inscriptions. The first document is a decision passed by a local association, dating to the

[50] Dion. Byz. 5, 17, 18, 21, 23 (Bathea Skopia), 28, 30, 37, 50, 56, 59 (Phaidalia), 60, 68, 71 (Bathykolpos), 72, 98.

[51] Deveciyan (1926) 552–3, with further discussion in Robert (1978) 534 and Lytle (2006) 106–7.

[52] Today, in fact, the Asiatic side is even more productive than the European: Dumont (1976–77) 107.

[53] Dion. Byz. 50.

[54] Dethier (1873) 62.

reign of the emperor Hadrian, here *hieromnamon* (eponymous magistrate) for the first time (τὸ α'). We find the *thiasitai*, the members of this association, making a dedication to a Dionysus Parabolos.[55] The second inscription, dating to the second term of Hadrian as *hieromnamon* (τὸ β'), is a decision taken by a group calling themselves the Dionysobolitai (*Διον[υ]σοβολειτῶν*).[56] The *stele* was initially ascribed to Dionysopolis in the Pontus.[57] Robert, noting the Doric dialect and the presence of the *hieromnamon*, later correctly ascribed it to Byzantium, taking the Dionysobolitai in relation to the epithet of Dionysus in the previous inscription as a local association devoted to this divinity.[58] The epithet he then connected to Dionysius' toponym, and he identified Dionysus Parabolos as a local god who acted as the patron of local fishermen. A *bolos*, the Greek root of the Turkish *voli*, is a location along the shore where fishing nets could be used in connection with a coastal installation or a beach seine. Dionysius mentions two other locations called Bolos because of local fishing activity: Neos Bolos (a 'recently discovered' fishing ground), and simply Bolos ('naturally suited in the winter for fish'). Parabolos, according to Robert, therefore referred to the place along which (or from which) nets could be thrown. Dionysus Parabolos was thus 'Dionysus of the fishing places', and the Dionysobolitai were members of a local association devoted to this god, comprised of people who made their living from the sea: a guild of fishermen.[59]

This explanation is not implausible. Guilds of fishermen must have existed among the local communities along the Bosporus. A local association of 'villagers' (κωμῆται) at Lake Delkos was grouped around the worship of Zeus Komatikos ('of the village').[60] However, there is nothing to suggest that we are dealing with a professional guild, and not simply an organized association of devotees which

[55] *IByz* 37. [56] *IByz* 38.

[57] *IGBulg* I[I] 29 contains the reading *Διον[υ]σοπολειτῶν*.

[58] Robert (1959) 199–200, (1978) 531–3; J. and L. Robert, *BE* 1962: 220, *BE* 1979: 286. See on this Łajtar, *IByz* p. 74, citing previous bibliography.

[59] Robert (1978) 533–5; see also discussion by Łajtar, *IByz*, p. 72. Lytle (2006) 106–7 n. 169 is rightly sceptical of Łajtar's certainty of an association comprised of fishermen; cf. Dumont (1976–77) 116 n. 129. On the word *bolos*, cf Belfiore (2009) 306: 'lancio della rete'; Dumont (1976–77) 108 n. 69: 'où l'on jette le filet'.

[60] *IByz* 21–3. All three were found in modern Terkoz (ancient Delkos). Cf. Robert (1955) 38–45; J. and L. Robert, *BE* 1956: 168. *IByz* 19 is a dedication *to* these villagers.

perhaps included some fishermen. Furthermore, Dionysius' explanation for the epithet is that the current here was both *deceptive* and *dangerous* (referring to the famous Devil's Current). Deceitful or dangerous is the more common meaning of the word *parabolos* (s.v. LSJ: 'with a side-meaning', 'deceitful', 'reckless', 'hazardous', etc.), and it is more likely that Dionysus Parabolos should be interpreted as Dionysus 'the Deceiver'.[61] Yet this does not mean that the god was unconnected with fishermen. His sanctuary was presumably located at Parabolos, next to a famous fishing spot, and the deceptive nature of the spot is mentioned by Dionysius in connection with fishing here. The god was perhaps honoured by fishermen for the same reason that Zeus Ourios was honoured by sailors, mentioned in Chapter 1.1: the fishermen prayed to 'the Deceiver' in the hopes that he would not mislead them and that he would protect them from harm in this infamous spot while they fished.

Productive inland lagoons are another gauge of regional variability in Horden and Purcell's Mediterranean. Byzantium possessed three extremely productive lakes which were connected by narrow mouths to the sea. Their mouths permitted coastal installations to operate in the lakes like those in the Bosporus itself. Lake Küçükçekmece, about 20 km^2, is situated to the west of Istanbul and connected by a small inlet to the Sea of Marmara. According to Deveciyan (Table D) its average annual productivity is 15,000 kg of fish. Another lake, Lake Büyükçekmece, located further west in ancient Rhegion, produced 12,000 kg. Such lakes, like the Bosporus itself, were potentially much more productive than the Mediterranean generally.[62] The most productive of these local inland lakes was Lake Delkos, where the inscriptions relating to the worship of Zeus Komatikos were found. The area was as famous in antiquity as it is today for its fish. In the lexicon of Hesychius of Alexandria (s.v. *Δέλκος*) it is described as 'a fish-bearing lake in Thrace' (*λίμνη ἰχθυοφόρος περὶ τὴν Θρᾴκην*). Euthydemus said that there existed a particular kind of fish called *delkanos*, which took its name from the river Delkon.[63] He is probably referring to Lake Delkos, for as Robert notes the 'ethnic' of the fish is the same as the ethnic of the dedicatees in one of our

[61] A. Chaniotis, *Kernos* 16 (2003) 280–2 makes this suggestion.
[62] On these lakes, see Dumont (1976–77) 112–13, and Robert (1955) 42–3, where these figures are cited.
[63] Athen. 3.118b.

inscriptions to Zeus Komatikos.[64] Today the lake provides Istanbul with up to 100,000 kg of fish annually, according to Deveciyan's figures, dwarfing the productivity of Byzantium's two other lakes. Fishermen and boats must have been a regular feature in the life of the ancient village located by this lake. Zosimus tells us that under Valerian, the Goths who were present in the area knew that the fishermen who occupied the lake and surrounding marshes had hidden there with their boats.[65]

What, if anything, does this overview of the evidence of fishing in the Bosporus tell us about the regional fishing industry? Caution dictates that modern statistics should not be used to attempt to quantify precisely the amount of fish available. What the evidence does suggest, however, is that this was a seasonal fishing industry, and that specific areas were more important than others. Industrial-scale coastal emplacements did not operate at full capacity all year round, and in many areas of the surrounding countryside much of the region's population was not involved in fishing, or was involved only on a sporadic basis. Access to large shoals of migrating fish, and the ability to predict their arrival, meant that the city enjoyed a regular surplus. A surplus of fish, which must be eaten fresh before it goes off, would entail a substantial processing industry to preserve the fish for export. Most importantly, the evidence suggests that the Bosporus was one of those few exceptional places in the Mediterranean where fishing productivity far surpassed normal standards.[66] With a few other places like the Strait of Gibraltar, migrating fish created enormous potential for revenues to be generated by the state. This does not necessarily mean that Dumont's view of an economy dependent on fishing is correct, as it does not tell us whether that potential was capitalized on, and because it is impossible to quantify just how important this was in the regional economy. Yet it does qualify Braund's minimalist assessment that Byzantium's reputation for fish was based on the work of non-Greeks in the Black Sea. An important proviso to this is that the ancient technology needed to be up to scratch if the Byzantines could exploit the potential of their region.

[64] Cf. Robert (1955) 40–2, citing these and later Byzantine sources concerning Delkos (later Derkos). On Delkos, see also Dumont (1976–77) 112–13.

[65] Zos. *Hist.* 1.34.2, cited and discussed by Robert (1955) 43.

[66] Note Dumont (1976–77) 97: 'c'est la détroit du Bosphore qui enserre la presqu'île de Byzance, et sa configuration très particulière confère à la pêche grecque de ces régions ses caractères originaux'. On surpluses: Mylona (2008) 43.

4.2 FISHING TECHNIQUES AND FISH PROCESSING

Dumont's reconstruction of the Byzantine economy requires that fishing techniques were efficient enough to create a large surplus sufficient both to cover local needs and also to be exported abroad. Yet a key tenet of Gallant's thesis is that ancient fishing techniques were inefficient; Dumont's and Rostovtzeff's reconstructions of the Bosporan and Pontic economies are criticized in Gallant's model as based on an overly optimistic assessment of the productivity of these techniques. Fishing methods could not even have covered local needs, he argues, hamstrung as they were by being shore-based, small-scale, time-consuming, and labour intensive.[67] So while this chapter may have established that the *potential* for large-scale, seasonal catches existed in the Bosporus, it remains uncertain whether the Byzantines were actually capable of exploiting that potential.

In modern times, before the development of industrial trawlers, the most efficient fishing technique utilized along migratory routes was the madrague. These are large-scale, coastal installations which utilize labyrinths of barrier nets to usher shoals of migrating fish through a gate, which is closed behind them, and towards a trap (a 'chamber of death') in which they are slaughtered. From here, the fish are brought ashore to be taken to market or processed. Such installations are sited at fixed points, and require very little labour to function, relying simply on the fish swimming blindly into the labyrinth of nets. In the first half of the twentieth century, these installations were in common use along the Sicilian coast and at the Strait of Gibraltar. During the 1920s, as we have seen, the Bosporus itself possessed over thirty of these installations, and they are singled out in the modern traveller accounts as one of the most characteristic sights of the Bosporus. Andreossy described the working of a typical madrague in the early nineteenth century:

> Fisheries are established in the bays which create shallows, and they may be seen as a form of Madrague. The fisherman spends much of his day at the top of an elevated tower at the centre of the fishery, which in some cases is underneath a hut covered in nets, and in others is simply a raised basket. He acts as the lookout, and he controls in his hands the

[67] Gallant (1985) 11, 23–5, 35.

> ends of ropes which are connected to various nets, and directs the operation of the Madrague. There exist numerous such fisheries along the banks of the Bosporus.[68]

In a madrague, a lookout at the top of a tall tower keeps an eye out for the approaching shoals of fish. When he catches sight of the fish, he gives a signal to the other operators of the madrague, or manipulates the nets himself, to set up the barriers.[69] Compared to boat-based net fishing, these installations could produce much larger catches while requiring less labour. It was the use of such emplacements which permitted the rapid development of the Spanish fishing industry along the Strait of Gibraltar in the Roman period. Potentially, in the Bosporus numerous madragues along the strait, at the mouth of the Pontus, or at the mouths of Byzantium's inland lakes, could have permitted the same.

That these installations existed in the Bosporus in early-modern times is clear, but were the ancient inhabitants of the region capable of utilizing similarly productive technologies? Gallant rejected the idea, arguing that the ancients did not have access to such technology.[70] Instead, Gallant drew a distinction between the modern madrague, described above (pp. 152–3), and a less efficient ancient variant, which, he claims, was much closer to the modern beach seine. Ancient sources, he admits, describe emplacements which operated in a similar manner to what we know as madragues. In a famous passage, Oppian describes how the tunny are captured in the following manner: a tunny watcher (*θυννοσκόπος*) watches from a hill for the approaching shoals, then informs his comrades who 'set forth the nets in the waves like a city'. What he is describing is a labyrinth of nets created by nets dropped from boats, controlled by 'gate-wardens' who close the nets behind the tunny as they swim through, ushering them through the maze toward the deeper, inner courts. Then the tunny, 'marching tribe by tribe', pour through the nets, 'and rich and excellent is the spoil'.[71] A similar operation is mentioned by Aelian in the Black Sea: the huge

[68] Andreossy (1828) 350 (transl. mine).

[69] The best treatment of the operation of these installations, with discussion of numerous examples, is Lytle (2006) 42–68. Other useful descriptions of the operation of madragues can be found in Dumont (1976–77) 107–8, Nicolas (1974) 13–14, Vargas and Corral (2010) 205–7, and Marzano (2013) 68.

[70] Gallant (1985) 21; cf. Lytle (2006) 45.

[71] Op. *Hal.* 3.640–8; see also Lytle (2006) 45–9.

fishery he describes would have required at least sixty-one operatives, who instead of manipulating fixed networks of nets, directed the nets from boats.[72] The difference, according to Gallant, is labour intensity: the madrague could operate semi-independently, with very little active participation from its operators. In the case of the beach seine, the nets must have been set up by the operatives from boats, who manually laid them out and directed the course of the tunny through the nets, following behind them to close the exits.[73] In Gallant's model, the amount of energy exerted to operate a beach seine leads to diminishing returns, and was less productive than the modern variant.

Yet as Lytle has shown the distinction is a misleading one; ancient beach seines which operated like the modern variant were well-known in antiquity, and much more productive than traditional net fishing.[74] Like the madrague, they operated according to the seasonal pattern of migrating fish, they produced large catches from the shoals, they required fixed emplacements on the coast, and as a consequence they could be leased by the state. Deveciyan locates over eighty such beach seines (*boloi*) in the Bosporus in the 1920s, and it is clear that this mode of fishing was well known in antiquity, capable of exploiting the Bosporus' potential productivity.[75] The best evidence that such installations were well known is that the ancient texts refer to the large, shore-based installations which it required, such as the watchtower, the *skopeia*. At Parion, a small city on the southern coast of the Propontis to the west of Cyzicus, two documents illustrate how such an operation functioned. Parion was, like Byzantium itself, famous for its migratory fish: located on the southern coast of the Propontis, migrating tunny and mackerel passed the city regularly, and the city is mentioned in the same breath with Byzantium by Athenaeus, who claims that while Byzantium was the mother of deep-sea mackerel and well-fed swordfish, Parion was the 'nurse of Spanish mackerel'.[76] The local inscriptions illustrate how the exploitation of these fish was organized. *IParion* 5, a document which was discovered at Callipolis on the Dardanelles but reattributed to Parion by the

72 Ael. *NA* 15.5, with detailed commentary in Lytle (2006) 56–60.

73 See the discussion in Lytle (2006) 42–3.

74 Lytle (2006) 45–59 gives a convincing and detailed criticism of Gallant's argument.

75 Deveciyan (1926) 552–3, with Lytle (2006) 106–7.

76 Athen. 3.116c; cf. Plin. *HN* 32.146.

Roberts, is an outline of how the profits from this kind of operation were distributed in the Roman period. The *stele* as originally described also contained a relief depicting Priapus, an altar with fish, a dolphin, and a thyrsus.[77]

ἐπὶ ἱερέως Καίσ[αρ]ος Λευκίου Φλαβίου
τὸ δεύτερον, οἱ δικτυαρχήσαντε[ς] καὶ τε[λων]-
α[ρχ]ήσαντες ἐν τῶι Νε[ι]λαίωι, ἀρχωνοῦντος Πό-
πλίου Ἀουίου Λυσιμάχου, δικ[τ]υαρχούντων Ποπλίου Ἀουίου 4
Λυσιμάχου, Ποπλίου Ἀουίου Ποπλίου ὑιοῦ Ποντικοῦ, Μάρ-
κου Ἀπικίου Κουαδράτου, Ἐπαγάθου τοῦ Ἀρτεμιδώρου,
Ποπλίου Ἀουίου Βείθυδος, σκοπιαζόντων Ἐπαγάθου
τοῦ Ἀρτεμιδωρου, Ποπλίου Ἀουίου Βειθυδος, κυβερών- 8
των Σεκ[ύν]δου τοῦ Α[ο]υίου Λυσιμάχου, Τυβελλίου Λ[..]
ΛΑΙΤΟΥ, φελ[λο]χαλαστοῦντος Τονγιλίου Κόσμου, ἐφη-
μερεύοντος Κασσίου Δαμασίππου, ἀντιγραφομέ-
νου Σεκο[ύν]δου τοῦ Ἀ<ο>υίου Λυσιμάχου, λεμβαρχ[ούν]- 12
των Ἀσκλη[πί]δου τοῦ Ἀσκληπίδου, Ἑρμαίσκου τοῦ Ἀ-
ουίου Λυσι[μάχ]ου, Εὐτύχου τοῦ Ἀυουίου Βείθυδος,
Μενάνδ[ρου τοῦ] Λευκίου, Ἱλάρου τοῦ Ἀσκληπιάδου,
συνναῦται. 16

In the second imperial priesthood of Lucius Flavius, the *diktyarchs* and *telonarchs* (?) in Neilion (dedicated this); the *archones* was Publius Avius Lysimachus; the *diktyarchs* were Publius Avius Lysimachus, Publius Avius Ponticus son of Publius, Marcus Apicius Quadratus, Epagathus son of Artemidorus, and Publius Avius Bithus; the *skopiazontes* were Epagathus son of Artemidorus, and Publius Avius Bithus; the *kyberontes* were Secundus son of Avius Lysimachus and Tubellius Laetus; the *phellochalastos* was Tongilius Cosmus; the *ephemeres* was Cassius Damasippus; the *antigraphomenos* was Secundus son of Avius Lysimachus; and the *lembarchs* were Asclepiades son of Asclepiades, Hermaiscus son of Avius Lysimachus, Eutychus son of Avius Bithus, Menander son of Leucius, and Hilarus son of Asclepiades. Shipmates.[78]

The document is typically connected with a second document from Parion, *IParion* 6, which, though fragmentary, provides evidence of

[77] The fullest discussion of the *stelai* from Parion is now Lytle (2006) 68–113 whose arguments I follow in this section. Other treatments of the documents: Robert and Robert (1950) 80–94; Purcell (1995) 146–7; Vargas and Corrall (2010) 213–14, Marzano (2013) 74–6.

[78] *IParion* 5.

an analogous association of fishermen involved in this kind of organization.[79]

What these important inscriptions show is that organized groups of fishermen in the Propontis leased from the state the right to use certain coastal installations used to catch migratory fish. In the case of our first document, the group is leasing the right to the use of a coastal tower, a *skopeia*, along with the associated emplacements of a beach seine from the Parian *polis*. That the group leased the rights to this installation, rather than owning it themselves, is significant. Like at the Bosporus, the availability of migratory tunny and mackerel at Parion was a seasonal phenomenon. Owning the installation outright might have been less efficient than renting it at seasonal intervals whenever the fish were in peak season. The seasonality of migratory fish in the Propontis therefore contributed to the modes by which fishing activities were organized. This association is organized in a rigid hierarchical structure, and the positions held by its members give various clues as to how the operation worked.[80] Toward the bottom of the hierarchy are five *lembarchs*, the boat-captains. These were the men who functioned as captains of the boats which carried and manipulated the nets, and they held authority over an unspecific number of *synnautai*, 'shipmates'.[81] These last, who are not important enough to be mentioned by name, and who received the smallest proportion of the profits, may have functioned as seasonal labourers: men hired by the others as required.

The rigid hierarchical structure of this association is striking, as is the fact that it is built on familial relationships. Purcell emphasizes the self-consciously collegial tone of the document. Yet as Lytle argues the terms used are not 'mock-heroic' attempts to equate the association with a Roman association of *negotiatores*. Instead, they are descriptive ('helmsmen', 'boat captains', 'shipmates'), and seem to relate to the actual function of each.[82] The structure of the association illustrates how fishing methods could be organized in a complex,

[79] A similar operation is known at Cyzicus, which was also famous in antiquity for its access to migrating tunny: *RGR* I, 296.

[80] Lytle (2006) 85–101 is the most detailed philological treatment of these positions, which improves on Robert and Robert (1950) 80–94.

[81] Lytle (2006) 93.

[82] Purcell (1995) 146–7, with Lytle (2006) 81 and 98, where he notes that the language of the document 'is not a singular act of "conscious self-representation" but corresponds to the anatomy of a large-scale fishing operation'.

regimented way in regions where migratory fish could be exploited. This document is significant to the Bosporus because it demonstrates that ancient communities could and did derive revenue from coastal fishing operations. The *polis* of Parion leased out the rights to these installations because they were sited at fixed spots, entailing permanent emplacements such as watchtowers. At the Bosporus, where Deveciyan locates over eighty *boloi* (i.e. beach seines directly analogous with the Parian operation), and thirty madragues (potentially larger still), we are dealing with very likely more than one hundred such contracts.[83] Though we have no such explicit evidence like the Parion inscription, we know, from a passage in the Aristotelian *Oeconomica*, discussed below (Chapter 4.3), that the *polis* of Byzantium was involved in some form of fishing monopoly. It is therefore an easy assumption to make that these kinds of installations did exist in the Bosporus in antiquity, and that they were the subjects of [Aristotle's] fishing monopoly. Dionysius' toponym Bathea Skopia, mentioned above (p. 147), must relate to the existence of a tunny watchtower there, while the 'fishing emplacement' (Gilles: *iactus piscum*) which caught shoals of fish at Bathykolpos was very likely a beach seine on the Parian model.[84] Oppian, moreover, provides evidence that the 'chamber of death', an enclosure created by the labyrinth of nets where the tunny were slaughtered with javelins, harpoons, etc., was known at Byzantium, and that the process of killing the tunny was automated: the 'Thracians', he claims, used a large log with tridents set along it to slaughter the tunny, making use of weights and pulleys to automate the process.[85] Such emplacements were very likely organized and leased in the same way that the emplacements at Parion were, with a similar level of structural complexity.

It may be that the symbolic and mythological significance attached to dolphins at the Bosporus can also be explained in economic terms, in connection with the operation of numerous such beach seines along the strait. Dolphins tend to stick close to shoals of tunny and mackerel, and it was, until very recently, a common practice for the operators of a seine to encircle the dolphins in order to encircle along with them the shoals of tunny accompanying them. In 1972, 315,000 dolphins were killed as a side effect of drift net fishing, and over

[83] Pointed out by Lytle (2006) 106–9.
[84] Dion. Byz. 23, 71. [85] Op. *Hal.* 4.531–61.

20,000 a year are killed by tunny fisheries.[86] On *IParion* 5, it was noted that the relief included the image of a dolphin. Very likely, this was because dolphins were utilized by the fishermen in precisely the same way. It is this practice which may be alluded to in a passage of Oppian, when he claims that the Thracians and those who live in the 'city of Byzas' hunt dolphins with harpoons.[87] Presumably the Byzantines did not hunt the dolphins solely for their meat, but as a side effect of tunny fishing. This would be an unfortunate outcome of the beach seine system, and the symbolism of dolphins at the Bosporus might therefore have developed from a genuine economic activity.[88] In the same fashion, the name of the strait and the importance of the cow Io might likewise have evolved from the very real practice of fording livestock. Dolphins, which as we have seen appear on Byzantine coins, were therefore viewed with a mixture of gratitude and guilt: gratitude, for helping the tunny watchers to locate their next catch, but also guilt and regret, because they were killed in the process. This helps to explain the pathos apparent in one inscription, which appears to have once served as the decoration for a fountain. It carries the farewell epigram of a deceased dolphin which has swapped its natural habitat, the sea, to come to dry land to die: 'I have exchanged the Nereids for the Nymphs / And I am now bound by the more pleasant drops of a foreign stream / Farwell to the gulfs abounding in wild fish, / We on the dry land renounce the sea.'[89] This offers one economic explanation for why dolphins came to act as symbolic of the strait: Hellenistic Byzantium's mint mark, as we saw in Chapter 3.4, was a dolphin or a trident. Economic and mythological symbolisms on local coins are not necessarily mutually exclusive; very easily, economic realities such

[86] Lytle (2006) 65 with n. 68, and see 62–3, 65–6; figures cited in Ellis (2003) 19, 219–20.

[87] Op. *Hal.* 5.519–89.

[88] Note Lytle (2006) 66 on the prevalence of dolphin motifs which appear to hold sacredness.

[89] *IByz* 10: *[ἤλλαγμ]αι Νύμφας Νηρηΐσι καὶ πεπέδημαι/[νάματος ἀ]λλοτρίου τερπνοτέραις σταγόσιν/[χαίροιτ' εἰ]ς κόλποιο μυχοὺς εὐίχθυες ἄγραι·/[—]ς χέρσωι πόντον ἀναινόμεθα*. Translation adapted from Łajtar's German translation. Note also the place named Delphin, mentioned by Dionysius and discussed in Chapter 1.2. Peek (1931) 129, no. 13 initially thought that the epigram referred to an individual who had drowned here; corrected by Herzog (1932) 1017–20, and Peek (1932) 59–60; on the genre, cf. Robert (1948) 5–11, and J. and L. Robert, *BE* 1958: 321. Russell (2012) connects the inscription with the site mentioned in the Dionysian aetiology.

as this can give rise to popular local legends and stories, such as those of Io the cow or Chalcis and the dolphin.

We have established, then, that while ancient fishing might not have reached the same capacity as the modern madrague, the beach seine system was well known, and on the Parion analogy was productive enough to allow the *polis* to generate revenues by leasing fishing contracts. These installations, it has been shown, existed along the Bosporus in antiquity. We have also gathered that Byzantium's fishing reputation was not only based on local catches, but on its role as a trading hub, where fish could be bought or exported. Freshly caught fish has a very short lifespan: it must be sold and eaten preferably on the same day or within two days at most.[90] To combat this, fish needed to be preserved: processed fish, that is fish which have been salted, smoked, or pickled, spoil much more slowly, and can be exported over long distances. The existence of a processing industry depends upon the fact that catches were large enough to fulfil not only local needs, but that the surplus was large enough to be exported. The fact that huge processing installations have been discovered in the Black Sea shows that the ancient beach seine system must indeed have been sufficient to raise a regional fishing industry to an industrial level. Archaeological evidence from Tyritake and Myrmekeion, cities in the Crimea, at Chersonesus, Panticapaeum, and Odessos has revealed the existence of large salting vats used to process and export fish.[91] At Chersonesus, the combined total capacity of salting vats discovered is in excess of 2,000 m^3.[92] There is no reason to believe that fishing techniques in the Black Sea were any more efficient than those used at the Bosporus. The idea that ancient fishing techniques were not efficient enough to create surpluses must therefore be rejected: Byzantium could enjoy not only the trade carried out within its fish market in Pontic fish, but also significant local fishing and salting industries which generated large revenues from the leasing of state contracts. The exact balance of local versus Pontic fish sold is impossible to quantify, but local fish must have made up a significant amount of the fish market at Byzantium.

[90] Mylona (2008) 75–6.

[91] Useful overviews of the material can be found in Curtis (1991) 118–29, Curtis (2005), Højte (2005), and Trakadas (2005).

[92] Curtis (1991) 125.

4.3 STATE INVOLVEMENT IN THE FISHING AND SALTING INDUSTRIES

An important passage from the Aristotelian *Oeconomica* suggests that the Byzantine *polis* went to great lengths to ensure that this industry was properly taxed and controlled. The passage has already been discussed in Chapter 3 for its connection to a protective tariff on foreign money. According to the author, the Byzantines, during a time of monetary crisis, instituted various schemes designed to raise money, among which included the apparent establishment of a state monopoly on 'all open spaces where anything was sold, as well as the sea fisheries and the trade in salt' (*τούς τε τοὺς ἀγοραίους, ἐν οἷς ἐπώλει τίς τι· καὶ τῆς θαλάττης τὴν ἁλιείαν, καὶ τὴν τῶν ἁλῶν ἁλατοπωλήν*).[93] The date is uncertain, and could conceivably fall any time between the late sixth and the late fourth centuries BC.[94] The anecdotal nature of this source makes it dangerous to find a more specific historical context, but the distinction apparently drawn here between the fish trade and the trade in salt supports the assumption that Byzantium possessed a processing industry. A processing industry cannot exist without fish surpluses, and this should be taken as further evidence that catches along the Bosporus were sufficient to provide this.

The establishment of a monopoly over fishing, though admittedly done at a time of crisis, is an indicator that the state was interested in securing maximum revenues from fishing in the Bosporus. Indeed, this passage has been interpreted as showing that general fishing monopolies were held by the state: the Bosporus fishing grounds were so productive that they invited such a high level of state intervention.[95] Although the measure mentioned in this passage was taken alongside other emergency measures like the forcible coercion of shipping, we have already seen that this was a sporadic, even regular activity at the Bosporus, and so perhaps was the creation of fishing monopolies. The passage is the cornerstone of Dumont's influential argument concerning fishing rights. Though Plato, in the

[93] [Arist.] *Oec.* 1346b 20–5.

[94] Cf. Dumont (1976–77) 114: 'Dès le milieu du ve siècle en effet, la pêche est à Byzance un monopole d'État'.

[95] Newskaja (1955) 47–9; Dumont (1976–77) 114–15; Rostovtzeff, *SEHHW* I, 1287; cf. Braund (1995) 165, stressing (correctly) that this practice was exceptional. Note also Strab. 7.6.2, who shows that fishing revenues continued to be collected in the Roman period.

Laws (8.824b–c), implied that the sea was common property, freely accessible to all, Dumont argued that in practice ancient authorities *routinely* laid claim to the sea and to fishing grounds.[96]

However, Ephraim Lytle has made a convincing case that ancient fishing was not routinely subject to state regulation *except* in certain circumstances where the local ecologies permitted exceptional levels of state involvement (for example regulation of shore-based installations designed to catch migratory tuna). None of the examples typically cited to support the view (Thasos, Iasos, Troezen, and Arsinoe) hold up to scrutiny, but relate to isolated examples or specific exceptions.[97] Lytle's argument, if accepted, adds to our developing view of the regional distinctiveness of the Bosporus, as one of those few areas in the ancient Mediterranean where the local ecology's unique characteristics permitted an unusual level of state involvement.

In fact, the *only* clear examples of fishing monopolies in antiquity are not general fishing monopolies, but are to do with state ownership of specific fisheries, usually designed to catch migratory tunny. A *polis* could not logistically maintain a monopoly over all forms of fishing in nearby waters, but it *could* own and rent any coastal installations which were necessary to operate large-scale coastal fisheries, such as a tunny watchtower or a beach seine system, if—and only if—those installations were located on land. How could a *polis* keep track of and regulate the catches of individual fishing boats on the open sea? As such, it is precisely at places like Parion or Byzantium, where fixed-place coastal installations could exist, that we have evidence of state intervention: the practice was rare, and while Dumont uses Byzantium as an example of a general fishing monopoly, it is in fact the exception which proves the rule.[98] Fishing monopolies could only be established at certain kinds of places, such as at straits, where fishing emplacements and migratory fish like tunny shoaled. As such, and as Lytle argues, [Aristotle's] use of the term *τὴν ἁλιείαν* must refer exclusively to the large installations and not to traditional boat-based fishing. Unlike Parion, where individual contracts with different terms and arrangements governed the leasing

[96] Dumont (1977).

[97] Lytle (2006) esp. 29–36, and Lytle (2012), with discussion of these examples at pp. 15–30.

[98] Lytle (2006) 38: 'Nevertheless, these operations were exceptional and the vast majority of marine fishing in the ancient Aegean would have been subject to no regulation whatsoever and it could only have been a source of indirect, though not necessarily insignificant, revenues'.

of each coastal emplacement, at the Bosporus the Byzantines simply decided to acquire and rent every single installation.[99]

That we must distinguish between shore-based fishing installations and traditional open-sea fishing is supported by legislation from medieval Constantinople. It was this tension between the property rights of the owners of coastal installations (*boloi*), and the rights of others to fish freely in the open water which led to the novels of Leo VI (AD 886–912). Leo intended to limit free access of fishermen to the sea, because it jeopardized private property rights: 'squatters' could fish freely in the waters around coastal installations, cutting into the profits of their legal owners. So in his Novels 56 and 57 he upheld the rights of the property owners, allowing them to expel those who attempted to fish in the waters around their property.[100] The remainder of Leo's regulations concerning fishing, Novels 102–4, constitute solutions to problems arising from the original two: they mandate partnerships in areas where the region was not large enough to accommodate two *boloi*, they make it illegal to refuse such a partnership, and they state how profits in such partnerships are to be distributed.[101] These regulations were used to maintain the state's control over coastal fishing industries, illustrating that this mode of fishing naturally attracted or invited state regulation. It is therefore entirely conceivable, given this level of state interest in coastal fishing, that ancient Byzantium should likewise involve itself in this industry. Such a step was, by extension, exceptional, for it could only be done in areas which could support coastal emplacements; a regional quirk connected to the idiosyncratic local fishing scene.

The fact that the Byzantine *polis* involved itself in coastal fishing to such a high degree reinforces the fact that when exploring ancient fishing, it is necessary to appreciate numerous individual contexts, because regional fishing varied so dramatically from place to place. Gallant's broad-stroke approach cannot appreciate the range of such contexts, nor does it recognize this distinction between coastal and open-water fishing. As Lytle notes, 'Horden and Purcell's construct of a permanently interconnected Mediterranean really conflates many different histories, and that for ancient historians the history of the

[99] Lytle (2012) 13, 31–2.

[100] This understanding of Leo's novels follows Lytle (2006) 109–112 and Lytle (2012) 33; cf. also Dagron (1995) 64–8.

[101] Lytle (2006) 111. On the Novels, cf. Mannier (1923), esp. 120.

Mediterranean came to a close a long time ago. In other words, as historians of the ancient Aegean or Mediterranean we are faced not only with the task of seeing beyond the forces of globalization reshaping the region, but also with the difficult job of reconstructing even more deeply buried and poorly documented contexts.'[102] As this chapter has shown, only by exploring *how* fishing functioned in the Bosporus' very specific and deeply buried contexts—the seasonal rhythm of tunny migrations, the operation of coastal emplacements, the currents and winds, and the distinction between shore-based and open-sea fishing—is it possible to understand *why* the Byzantine *polis* was able to take this exceptional step and establish a state monopoly.

Fishing in the Bosporus was, then, an important local industry; it was so important that the state involved itself in leasing fishing contracts, which like the contracts for administration of the Bosporus toll could be a lucrative source of revenue. David Braund is thus wrong to attribute Byzantium's reputation to the efforts of Pontic fishermen, for otherwise the Byzantine *polis* would have been incapable of doing this. Although Pontic fish necessarily passed through the city, there existed a seasonal fishing industry in the Bosporus which generated large, regular surpluses, echoed today in the seasonal variation of tunny sold at the Istanbul fish market. Access to large-scale coastal fisheries and to preservation installations permitted Byzantine products to be exported far afield: there is no good reason to believe that the Byzantine *tarichos* which Kydippos in Egypt requested of Zeno were not actually caught in the Bosporus. Though the importance of fishing to the regional economy cannot be quantified precisely, the fact that fishing came to be viewed as a regional quirk of the Bosporus, a local character trait, attests to its significance. This came about because, as with the monetary system discussed in the Chapter 3, the inhabitants of the region were capable of interacting with their environment to exploit its unique opportunities. The nature of this interaction emphasizes that ancient economic history must strive to appreciate these varied local contexts: the Bosporus' fishing industries were based on migratory shoals and local geographical peculiarities. As such, they could not be replicated except in analogous regions, such as the Strait of Gibraltar, and cannot be taken as representative of the level of ancient state interest in fishing industries.

[102] Lytle (2006) 326; and cf. Mylona (2008) 37.

5

'The First Greek City to which we have come'

> Nay, such being in general the adverse circumstances against which they have to struggle on land, they have in addition to the other evils attendant on war to suffer too something like the torments of Tantalus that Homer describes; for, owners as they are of a fertile country, when they have carefully cultivated it and a superb harvest is the result, and when the barbarians now appear and destroy part of the crops, collecting and carrying off the rest, then indeed, apart from their lost toil and expense, the very beauty of the harvest when they witness its destruction adds to their indignation and distress.[1]

Classical and Hellenistic Byzantium possessed a notoriously difficult relationship with its Thracian neighbours. Polybius, in this passage, creates the impression of a Greek enclave, surrounded by hostile Thracians. Having described Byzantium's advantageous geographical position, he says that the city's greatest disadvantage was the presence of its Thracian neighbours, who completely surrounded and hemmed the city in. He goes on to caricature the relationship between the Byzantines and their neighbours as one of continual struggle and conflict: a 'perpetual and dangerous war' which the Byzantines could never bring to an end. Owing to the sheer number of the Thracians, there could be no decisive military victory; while the Byzantines could not bribe the chieftains through the payment of tribute without encouraging the others to seek similar concessions. The consequence of this situation was that the Byzantines were unable to benefit from the full potential of their agricultural land. Like Tantalus, they were

[1] Pol. 4.45.5 (transl. Paton, Loeb).

forced to watch as the Thracians took for themselves the fruits of their labours.

It is possible to infer from Polybius' account that the Byzantines and Thracians were kept wholly distinct: the constant warfare left little potential for good relations to develop between the two groups, or for Thracian influence to penetrate the city to any significant degree. This general picture is widely accepted today, though we possess very little evidence by which to measure the integration of inhabitant Thracians in the civic life of the Byzantine *polis*, and thus to test the assumptions and prejudices found in literary sources. Conclusions have therefore been inconclusive and at variance. Nezih Fıratlı, the editor of the corpus of funerary *stelai* from Byzantium's ancient necropolis, believed that he could trace in the style of the funerary reliefs and in traces of the worship of the goddess Bendis, evidence that the city was 'en réalité une ville thrace'. Louis Robert, his co-commentator, took a contrary position, and, citing Xenophon's famous description of Byzantium as 'the first Greek city', threw his influential weight behind Polybius' account.[2] His conclusions have been upheld on prosopographical grounds by Louisa Loukopoulou, who adds that stringent citizenship requirements at Byzantium would have worked against the integration of Thracians into Byzantine civic life, and can explain the limited proportion of Thracian personal names known from the region. She concludes that despite the city's location in eastern Thrace, the indigenous peoples remained excluded from political life; unable to alter the 'ethnic character' of the city's Greek institutions.[3]

The aim of this chapter is a modest one. It is not to attempt to refute the Polybian view. In any case the evidence is too limited to permit a clear picture of the status of inhabitant Thracians in Byzantium's territory, and onomastic arguments are inherently dangerous because of the incomplete nature of the evidence. Instead, I shall examine the way in which the relationship between Greeks and Thracians, and by extension the identity of the city itself, was conceptualized by Greek sources. The unique way in which the Greek Byzantines rationalized their coexistence alongside Thracian barbarians was, I shall argue, a necessary consequence of living at the mouth of the Black Sea, of occupying a hostile frontier zone. The Byzantines'

[2] Fıratlı-Robert, 26–7, 37, 45 (Fıratlı); 133–5, 152 (Robert).
[3] Loukopoulou (1989a) 78–83, (1989b) 190–200.

aim was to justify their continued control of the strait, and to present their dominance of the Bosporus as a boon to the rest of Greece. In turn, they legitimized their own attempts to tax Pontic trade.

The chapter begins by examining the definition of citizenship at Byzantium, and asks whether it was possible for the children of mixed marriages to attain Byzantine citizenship, or for Thracians to participate in Byzantine political life. Were the two ethnic groups as sharply distinguished as Loukopoulou suggested? It then explores the 'ethnic character' of Byzantium's ritual practices through its festival calendar. If inhabitant Thracians were integrated into the civic life of the Greek *polis*, we should expect them to have brought with them their epichoric cult practices alongside local naming habits—the worship of the goddess Bendis, which may be reflected in Byzantium's festival calendar, was another of Fıratlı's arguments in favour of a 'Thracian' city. This, as we shall see, is manifestly not the case, and Byzantium's cultural and religious life, as far as this may be reflected in the sources for the festival calendar, resembles instead that of any typical Greek *polis*. In the final section, where the evidence for the involvement of Thracians in Byzantium's civic life is considered, I argue that the picture left to us by the literary and epigraphic evidence is an intentionally misleading one. Byzantium's Greek identity was consciously constructed in opposition to the city's Thracian neighbours, and deliberately designed to match the picture found in the literary sources for ideological reasons. The integration of the Thracians within the territory can, I argue, only be traced with great difficulty in the onomastic and iconographic evidence. Their involvement in the life of the *polis* is deliberately obscured in our sources because of the constant threat posed by the Thracian tribes beyond Byzantium's borders, who caused the Byzantines to seek to distinguish themselves against this non-Greek 'other'.

5.1 [ARIST.] *OEC.* 1346B 26–1347A 3: CITIZENSHIP AND PARTICIPATION

According to [Aristotle] in the *Oeconomica*, the people of Byzantium, on one occasion when the city was facing a financial crisis, voted to sell out citizenship to non-citizen bastards for 30 minas. Previously, we are told, citizenship was restricted to those whose parents

were *both* citizens: that is, a system of double endogamy, analogous to that which functioned in Athens following Pericles' citizenship law. The passage also claims that resident aliens did not normally possess the right to own property: there were metics in the city who had lent money as security for citizens' property, and during a different emergency the Byzantine *demos* decided to recognize their right to the property if they paid a third of its value into the state treasury. The implication is that the metics did not, in normal circumstances, possess this right, and that the right to possess landed property was restricted to citizens, as was generally the case in other *poleis*.[4]

> *ὄντος δὲ νόμου αὐτοῖς μὴ εἶναι πολίτην ὃς ἂν μὴ ἐξ ἀστῶν ἀμφοτέρων ᾖ, χρημάτων δεηθέντες ἐψηφίσαντο τὸν ἐξ ἑνὸς ὄντα ἀστοῦ καταβαλόντα μνᾶς τριάκοντα εἶναι πολίτην . . . μετοίκων δέ τινων ἐπιδεδανεικότων ἐπὶ κτήμασιν, οὐκ οὔσης αὐτοῖς ἐγκτήσεως ἐψηφίσαντο τὸ τρίτον μέρος εἰσφέροντα τοῦ δανείου τὸν βουλόμενον κυρίως ἔχειν τὸ κτῆμα.*
>
> And whereas there was a law amongst them that no one should have political rights who was not born of parents who were both citizens, being in want of money they [the Byzantines] passed a decree that a man who was sprung from a citizen on one side only should become a citizen if he paid down thirty minae . . . And whereas certain resident aliens had lent money on mortgaged property, because these had not the right to hold property, they passed a decree that any one who wished could obtain a title to the property by paying a third of the loan to the state.[5]

We learn from this passage of the existence of various social groups at Byzantium: citizens with full citizen rights, bastards, who because they possessed only one citizen parent lacked full citizen rights, and metics. I will describe the bastards as *nothoi*, though the passage does not use this word. Whether this was a separate legal status like in Athens is not clear, nor were they necessarily born out of wedlock. We do not know the date of these sales of citizenship and property rights. They could have taken place any time before the composition of the Oeconomica in the late fourth century (so Ogden 1996: 168), but as we shall see the citizenship sale looks forward to the Hellenistic period.

Normal practice before the composition of the *Oeconomica*, it appears, was that the bastards of a foreign mother were excluded

[4] Note Finley (1973) 48.
[5] [Arist.] *Oec.* 1346b 26–1347a 3 (transl. Forster, Oxford: 1920).

from citizenship. This situation was altered some time before our passage: probably, the change was a temporary response to a financial emergency, though it may have been a measure which recurred over the course of the Hellenistic period in reaction to other financial crises. As a consequence, the passage has been taken as evidence that the Byzantines, under normal circumstances, took steps to exclude the children of Greeks and Thracians from active political life. Loukopoulou, connecting the passage with the limited number of Thracian names on funerary *stelai* from Hellenistic Byzantium, concluded that despite the city's proximity to European Thrace, 'there could be no question of any significant demographic mixing or alteration of the ethnic character of the colonists (*colons*)'.[6] However, it is not necessary to assume that the law demanding dual Byzantine parentage went back to the days of the early colonists. Perhaps, like in Athens, the Byzantines did not originally prohibit children born of Byzantine fathers and foreign mothers from citizenship, but introduced their own equivalent of a Periclean citizenship law, altering an earlier, looser definition of citizenship, sometime subsequent to the establishment of the earliest settlements along the Bosporus. This situation could once again have been relaxed some time before the composition of the *Oeconomica*.[7] There is no need to imagine that Byzantium's constitution *always* excluded these children from citizenship, nor that the relaxation of citizenship requirements was not repeated during the Hellenistic period.

Indeed, the very fact that the Byzantines loosened their double endogamy requirement for citizenship at this time, the beginning of the Hellenistic period (at the latest), is, as Ogden has noted, exceptional: *nothoi* with only one citizen parent were typically excluded from full citizen rights in most *poleis* in the Classical period.[8] Aristotle's definition of citizenship 'in practice' is that it is limited to the children of citizens on both sides, not only the paternal or maternal.[9] Though Byzantium's

[6] Loukopoulou (1989b) 199: 'il ne saurait être question de mélanges démographiques importants ni d'altération du caractère ethnique des colons'.

[7] Cf. Loukopoulou (1989b) 198–9. Vérhilac and Vial (1998) 60 also see this sale as 'une mesure circonstancielle, temporaire, et limitée à une catégoire de bénéficaires.'

[8] Ogden (1996) 277; cf. Hannick (1976) 133–48 on the circumstances of exceptions to this general rule.

[9] Arist. *Pol.* 1275b 22–4. Examples of distinctions between *nothoi* and full citizens outside Athens are collected by Vérhilac and Vial (1998) 53–79, and Ogden (1996) 280–2.

measures were precipitated by a financial crisis, they therefore provide one of the earliest examples of a more relaxed attitude toward citizenship which developed during the Hellenistic period.[10] More importantly, at Byzantium, one group which would have benefited from this sale would have been the children of unions between a Thracian and a Greek, for even if born in wedlock the child of such a union would not receive citizenship. The relaxation of citizenship requirements might therefore represent an attempt to incorporate this group into the political and civic life of the *polis*, although we should remember that *nothoi* at Byzantium, an international trading hub, should not be viewed as necessarily Thracian in ethnicity.

Examples of citizenship sales have been collected and examined by Ogden, and in line with the development elsewhere it is likely that the measure was not a one-time occurrence at Byzantium. However, like Byzantium, which limited the sale to *nothoi* and not to non-citizens generally, restrictions were usually imposed. At Dyme in the third century BC citizenship was sold to *epoikoi* who were 'free and born to free parents', but came at a steep price, a talent, if the restoration is correct, and thus remained exclusive (a talent, 60 minas, is double the already significant cost at Byzantium).[11] At Ephesus we have two examples of citizenship sales. In the late fourth century citizenship was sold to five of the 'free born', retaining a numerical limit.[12] Again in the early third century it was sold cheaply for 6 minas, but only a limited number of people were allowed to be enrolled ('no more than . . . ').[13] At Aspendus it was (probably, though the reading is not certain) sold for a sum of money to be decided by the city.[14]

[10] Ogden (1996) 296–7; Vatin (1970) 122.

[11] *Syll.*[3] 531: [*ἐπὶ τ*]*οῖδε τὰν πολιτ*[*είαν*] *ἐποί*[*κοις· δόμεν ταῖ πό*]*λι τὸν θέλοντα κοινωνε*[*ῖν Δυμ*]*αί*[*ων τᾶς πόλιος ὄντ*]*α ἐλεύθερον καὶ ἐξ ἐλευ*[*θέρων*] *τά*[*λαντον ἐπὶ γρα*]*μματεός*. See Ogden (1996) 297.

[12] *SEG* XXXIX 1155.

[13] *IEphesus* VI, 2001, 9–10 . . . *ποήσασθαι πολίτας ἐξαμναίους, ἐλευθέρους καὶ ἐξ ἐλευθέρων, μή πλείους ἢ δε*[*καπέντε*]. The number fifteen is restored, but we can at least tell that there was some numerical limit to the number of new citizens allowed to be enrolled in this way. Cf. Ogden (1996) 297–8.

[14] Wilhelm, *Beiträge* IV, 61–2, no. 2. The inscription is highly fragmentary: ll. 10–11 reads '(for) them to be citizens' (*εἶνα*[*ι αὐτο*]*ὺς πολίτας*), then ll. 15–18 seem to read ' . . . and if one of them wishes to be enrolled in a *phyle* . . . money . . . the *polis* decides . . . ' (*ἐὰν δὲ* [*τι*]*ς αὐτῶν βούληται καταχωρι*[*σθῆν*]*αι εἰς φυλ*[*ὴν . . . ἀργ*]*ύριον . . . ἡ πόλις βουλ . . .*), suggesting that the state would decide the sum of money to be paid. On this inscription, see Ogden (1996) 298.

However, Phaselis in the third century was criticized for granting citizenship without restriction to whomever desired it (*ton boulomenon*) for the token sum of a single mina, which meant that a large number of unworthy citizens were registered. This is the only known example without a numerical, ethnic, or censorial limitation:

> *τὴν ἐπὶ Λύσιδος πολιτείαν· ἐπὶ τῆς ἀναξίας· φασὶ γὰρ Φασηλίτας ψηφίσασθαι τὸν βουλόμενον Φασηλίτην μνᾶν δόντα πολιτευέσθαι, εἶτα πολλῶν ἐγγραφέντων ἀναξίων γενέσθαι τὴν παροιμίαν.*
>
> "Citizenship in the year of Lysias": unworthiness. For they say that the Phaseilites voted that any Phaselite who wished could become a citizen having paid one mina, and then when many unworthy people had been enrolled the maxim arose.[15]

This case, as Ogden argues, may have been prompted by a manpower shortage rather than a financial crisis like at Byzantium, for the cost of citizenship is negligible and, unlike the other examples, there were apparently no restrictions.[16]

Even if Byzantium's citizenship sale was not repeated, and the practice *was* limited to the precise situation described in the *Oeconomica*, it does not necessarily mean that the children of Thracian and foreign mothers remained excluded from civic participation. Louis Robert, investigating the Phaselis case, drew an important distinction between the right to hold office and attend the *ekklesia*, that is full participatory rights, and a passive right of 'citizenship' generally, which released the holder from the obligations of resident aliens, such as the metic tax.[17] Robert demonstrates that at Phaselis, which like Byzantium was a coastal commercial city, this kind of offer would have been extremely attractive to the metics who were resident in the city for mercantile business, and by offering only 'passive' rights the Phaselites could prevent any perceived ethnic dilution of their political institutions. It may have been in this indirect way that the Phaselites placed a limit on the new citizens they allowed to be enrolled, accomplished in the other cases by direct numerical limitations.[18] This kind of situation is

[15] Macarius viii. 26 = *CPG* 217–18. [16] Ogden (1996) 296–7.

[17] Robert (1940) 37–42, esp. 38.

[18] It should also be noted that the sale of citizenship in Phaselis was apparently limited to one year, the year when Lysias was archon, and was not a permanent situation: Robert (1940) 41; cf. Ogden (1996) 297.

what Daniel Ogden tentatively terms 'tiered' citizenship.[19] That is, a system which drew a distinction between citizens with full, active political rights, and those with only certain passive rights, *nothoi* or otherwise defined by the state.

Examples of tiered systems are collected by Ogden. At Rhodes, the distinction seems to have been drawn between full citizens and *nothoi*, because epigraphic evidence apparently accords *metroxenoi* (although this term is not used, and we instead find the phrase 'of a foreign mother'), that is, the bastard children of citizen fathers, a special legal status.[20] A similar situation is likely at Cos, where Sherwin-White distinguished between full citizens and citizens with only some rights, on the basis of a decree providing for the re-registration of citizens in order to decide who could legitimately participate in the rites of Apollo, which asks for the patronymic, matronymic, and name of the mother's father. In requiring these different names, Vérhilac and Vial note, a Coan *nothos* was not simply, like at Athens, a *xenos* excluded from all citizen rights, but that the possession of a Coan father or mother altered the status of the *nothos* in some way.[21] Another inscription makes clear that there were different categories of citizen and non-citizen status: citizens (*politai*/*politides*), bastards (*nothoi*), resident foreigners (*paroikoi*), and foreigners (*xenoi*) are all listed as distinct categories.[22] It is virtually certain that some such distinction existed at Miletus between *nothoi* and full citizens, based on the evidence of lists of new citizens from 222/1 and 232/1. These lists usually register foreigners of two main kinds: foreigners who are registered with an ethnic (i.e. naturalized resident foreigners: *demopoietoi* in Athens), and others who are described as *nothoi*. As Vérhilac and Vial show, the *nothoi* received their citizenship

[19] Ogden (1996) 299–304; cf. Vélissaropoulos-Karakostas (2008), who makes the same point.

[20] Maiuri, *NSER* 19, 130; *Lindos* II. 1, no. 51 C i. 26–7; no. 88.286–7: *ματρὸς δὲ ξένας* is the term used in these inscriptions: see Ogden (1996) 300–01; cf. Fraser (1972) II, 47–9; III, 133, n. 102, with Rostovtzeff, *SEHHW* II, 689–70, who thought that 'those who had only one Rhodian parent became a kind of political half-caste known as *matroxenos*'. As Ogden warns, we should not perhaps go so far as Rostovtzeff in establishing four tiers of Rhodian citizenship: cf. Ogden (1996) 301–4 and Vérhilac and Vial (1998) 65–8 for more measured discussions of this evidence.

[21] *Syll.*[3] 1033, with Vérhilac and Vial (1998) 61–2; cf. also Ogden (1996) 310–13. Sherwin-White (1978) 153–4, with Zuntz (1963) 231, 235.

[22] *IG* XII 4, 1, 75a.7–11: *δεδόχθαι· ἐ[π]αγγέλλεσθαι τὸς δηλομένος τῶν τε πολιτᾶν καὶ πολιτίδων καὶ νόθων καὶ πα[ρ]οίκων καὶ ξένων*; cf. Ogden (1996) 310–12; Vérhilac and Vial (1998) 60–2.

because they already had a Milesian citizen as their father, who had declared them before the city and (presumably) paid some kind of a tax to have them registered as citizens. This went on year by year at Miletus, usually two or three *nothoi* per year, unlike at Byzantium where the sale of citizenship was a response to exceptional circumstances.[23]

A promising analogy is the status of *demopoietos* in fifth- and fourth-century Athens, granted to those who received Athenian citizenship by decree. Unlike Athenian citizens by birth, *demopoietoi* were excluded from the nine archonships and from the hereditary priesthoods, though no restrictions were placed on any children they might have by an Athenian wife, so long as they were born from lawful wedlock.[24] This analogy cannot be pressed, however. Athenian citizens by decree were not excluded from any political activity or the law courts, and their exclusion from these offices was for purely religious reasons (the nine archons performed various religious tasks). As Kapparis has shown, it was so unlikely that a *demopoietos* would be drawn by lot to serve as one of the archons (and it would require the unlikely event that he be adopted into a particular *genos* to hold one of the hereditary priesthoods), as to make this no practical disability at all.[25] This is not the situation envisaged in these other cases, where the disability constituted a practical exclusion from active political life.

A similar 'tiered' system may have developed at Byzantium during the Hellenistic period. Though this must remain an entirely hypothetical situation, it is sufficient to observe that we do not need to assume that the citizenship restrictions remained so harshly enforced throughout Byzantium's history, or that those who fell outside the narrow definition of citizenship *always* remained entirely excluded from civic life. It is significant that the different episodes described by [Aristotle] appear to be temporally distinct: the concession to metics was not granted at the same time as the sale of citizenship to *nothoi*. In van Groningen's Budé the two events are kept separate by dividing them into two sections (3a and 3b), whereas in Austin and Vidal-Naquet's *Social and Economic History of Ancient Greece* (no. 91a), the two are telescoped into one paragraph. What seems clear is that there

[23] Vérhilac and Vial (1998) 62–5, with references; on Miletus, see also Ogden (1996) 304–10.

[24] [Dem.] 59.92, 104. Such children would be Athenian citizens by birth, though children who were not born from a legal marriage to an Athenian woman would inherit the status of citizen by decree. See on this Kapparis (1999) 372–4.

[25] So Kapparis (1999) 372–4.

are two separate occasions: a time when the Byzantines lacked money, and a time when they lacked money *and* food. [Aristotle] thus says that *enktesis* was sold out to metics, but that citizenship was sold to *nothoi*, at different times. Access to citizenship was preserved for *nothoi*. It was not opened up generally like at Phaselis. This suggests that *nothoi* were viewed as separate from the metics, like in the cases outlined from elsewhere; as ethnically closer to the citizen body, and more deserving of the opportunity to purchase citizenship. Perhaps, by analogy with these other cases, the citizenry of Byzantium recognized or would come to recognize this group, comprised of the children of foreign mothers, as occupying a distinct 'tier' of citizenship. Such a group would have consisted of the children of marriages between Byzantines and Thracians, as well as the offspring of unions between merchants visiting Byzantium and locals. This situation would fit by comparison with the systems in place in Hellenistic Miletus, Rhodes, Cos, and Phaselis. Moreover, the possibility of such a situation illustrates that Byzantine citizenship need not have been as narrowly defined as assumed by Loukopoulou, or that it was always so narrowly defined, and it would not necessarily have constituted so clear a distinction between Greek and Thracian ethnic customs as she imagines, at least in the Hellenistic period and beyond—rather, the Byzantine *polis* might conceivably have taken steps to incorporate the children of mixed marriages.

This situation is entirely hypothetical. No evidence from Byzantium proves that different tiers of citizenship ever developed, however likely the development is to have taken place over the course of the Hellenistic period based on comparison with other cities. Nevertheless, the very fact that the case from the *Oeconomica* provides one of the earliest examples of citizenship sales is itself significant. It is easy to imagine that at Byzantium tight relationships between Greeks and Thracians might have contributed to this opening up of citizenship. It may have been precisely the narrow economic contacts, social interaction, cultural interchange, and romantic liaisons between Byzantines and Thracians which caused the city to take the remarkable step of loosening its citizenship requirements at such an early stage. There is no reason that this step could not have been repeated many times over the course of the Hellenistic period, with access to citizenship being gradually opened up to the bastards of resident foreigners and Thracians. If so, we should seek alternative explanations for the limited proportion of Thracian personal names known from Byzantium.

5.2 CULTS AND CALENDAR

An important but obscure and difficult piece of evidence for Byzantium's ritual and social life is the city's festival calendar. It is preserved in late, fragmentary sources, while several months are mentioned on local inscriptions, furnishing a detailed snapshot of the deities revered at the Bosporus in the course of Byzantium's festival year. The calendar, which shares affinities with the calendars of other Pontic, Megarian cities, is a dangerous source to use, but has two main applications: as a source for the level to which Thracians were or were not incorporated into the *polis*' religious life, and as an indicator of the Greek, colonial *milieu* to which Byzantium belonged, that is, of the heritage of its mother-city. As we shall see, neither issue is a simple one. It is not clear how much influence a mother-city had on the formation of its colonies' calendars, and how much was rather due to cultural exchange among the colonies themselves. That is, were calendars imposed by the centre upon the periphery, or did they evolve within the periphery in conscious imitation of the *metropoleis*? Furthermore, the lack of 'Thracian' months has been taken as evidence for the limited extent to which Thracians participated in local religious life, while simultaneously other months have been interpreted as reflecting Thracian cults worshipped at a state festival. Yet it remains unclear how accurately our Roman sources preserve the local months, and it is uncertain whether epichoric, Thracian cults worshipped by the inhabitants of Byzantium would ever have been represented on the city's festival calendar—conclusions on the basis of the calendar about the involvement of Thracians in the city's religious life remain arguments from silence.

To make any constructive use of the calendar we must, however, begin by reconstructing it. Our knowledge of Byzantium's calendar is owed to the *Liber Glossarum*, a compendium of miscellaneous fragments of information used during the Middle Ages, along with the glosses to this source in the *Elementarium* of Papias the lexicographer, who wrote in the middle of the eleventh century AD. The fullest treatment of the *Lib. Gloss.* is Hanell's 1932 *Das Menologium des Liber Glossarum*, which he follows in *Megarische Studien* (1934). These sources transmit to us the names of months from various calendars as they were known to the Romans. In this way the calendars of Byzantium, Bithynia, Rome, Athens, Perinthus, and other places are preserved, some of which, like that of Byzantium, are

known exclusively from these sources.[26] It is possible, with minor corrections, to restore Byzantium's calendar entirely. The Latin Iateos, difficult to connect to a Greek month, was interpreted by Hermann, on the basis of the reading Iatheos in Papias' gloss, as *Ὑακίνθιος*, a fairly common Dorian month which is found in seven other Dorian cities outside Byzantium, including Sparta, Rhodes, and Cos.[27] However, the actual month to which Iateos must correspond is *Λατοῖος*, now attested on two Byzantine inscriptions.[28] Secondly, instead of *Καρνεῖος* Hanell inserted *Ἡρμαῖος*, because the Karneia was a late summer festival and, he thought, could not seasonally correspond with November as it does in the *Lib. Gloss.* Hermaios, however, is attested in Bithynia as a November month, which Hanell chose as a replacement.[29] It has since been shown that this insertion is unnecessary, and Karneios is closest to the manuscript reading.[30] With these caveats we have a fairly reliable picture of Byzantium's calendar. The version printed is the calendar established by Hanell, with the exception of the incorporation of Karneios. It gives the months corresponding to the Roman months with which they are associated by the *Lib. Gloss.* and Papias, although whether they in fact corresponded seasonally is another question.[31]

Πεταγείτνιος	January
Διονύσιος	February
Εὐκλεῖος	March

[26] Hanell (1932) 3, n. 4. On the *Lib. Gloss.*, aside from Hanell (1932), cf. Mountford (1923) and Bröckner (1847); on Papias, cf. Hermann (1848).

[27] Hermann (1848) 263. For the existence of the month Hyakinthios in other Dorian cities, cf. Trümpy (1997) index s.v.

[28] *IByz* 2.1: 'when Hestiaeus was hieromnamon, (in the month of) Latoios . . . ' (*ἐπὶ ἱερομνάμονος Ἑστιαίου, Λατοίου κτλ.*). The month is also attested on an unpublished dedication: Robert (1959) 202, n. 5; Robert (1978) 531, n. 24; Łajtar, *IByz*, p. 25. Hermann was followed by Mountford (1923) 111–12. For the correction: Hanell (1932) 22; Samuel (1972) 88; J. and L. Robert, *BE* 1973: 69; Trümpy (1997) 147–8. Trümpy believed this month to be unique to Byzantium, but it is also found at Chersonesus Taurica: *SEG* XLVI 930, with Avram (2009) 312.

[29] Hanell (1932) 25–7, and followed in Hanell (1934) 194–5.

[30] Samuel (1972) 88; Trümpy (1997) 148, n. 632; Avram (2000) 112, n. 512.

[31] Hanell (1932) 21–7, (1934) 190–1. Of other versions of the calendar, the most recent is that of Avram (2000) 110–15, following the substance of his 1999 article, where Byzantium's calendar is treated with special reference to that of Callatis. Trümpy (1997) 149 deviates from the correspondences with Roman months given by the *Lib. Gloss*. Other versions are *RE* X s.v. Kalender col. 1569; Mountford (1923) 111–12; Samuel (1972) 87–8.

Ἀρτεμίσιος	April
Λυκεῖος	May
Βοσπόριος	June
Λατοῖος	July
Ἀγριάνιος	August
Μαλοφόριος	September
Ἡραῖος	October
Καρνεῖος	November
Μαχάνειος	December

Each month is connected by our medieval sources to a month from the Julian calendar. Before we can explore other questions it is necessary to establish whether the months in fact roughly corresponded seasonally with these Roman months. Of the other calendars preserved in the *Lib. Gloss.*, and which are attested in other menological sources (i.e. excluding Byzantium, Perinthus, and Etruria), Hanell established two important facts: the months all tend to run in the correct order, but the calendars do not all begin on the actual New Year.[32] Some are entirely correct. The Hebrew calendar, aside from minor peculiarities concerning the names of the months, runs in the proper order and begins in the first month of the New Year, Roman April. The Bithynian calendar is also correctly synchronized, its New Year beginning in Heraios, October in Bithynia. On the other hand, a number of calendars are preserved with the months given in the correct order but the New Year beginning in the wrong month, made instead to correspond with Roman January. In the Athenian calendar, for example, the names of the months are all preserved correctly and given in their proper order, but the New Year, which began in Hekatombaion, is made to correspond with January, when in fact it fell in July.[33] It seems that whenever the authors of the glosses possessed information about the New Year, they incorporated it, but where they did not, they simply connected it with Roman January, dislocating the seasonal positions of all the months. Assuming that the Byzantine months are given in the correct order, as they are in the other calendars from the *Lib. Gloss.*, did the months accord seasonally with their Roman equivalents?

Hanell argued at length in favour of retaining the correspondences with the Julian months, at least as approximations. Comparison with

[32] Hanell (1932) 23.
[33] Hanell (1932) 1–17, esp. 6–7 (Hebrew), 7–10 (Athenian), 12–13 (Bithynian).

the Bithynian calendar supports his argument. In the Bithynian calendar, which is accurately preserved, we find Dionysios falling in January (one month behind Byzantium), and Bendidios, a month named after the Thracian goddess Bendis, who was often equated with Artemis/Diana, in April, mirroring Byzantium's Artemisios. September in Bithynia is given as Demetrios, while Malophorios in Byzantium, a month named for Demeter Malophorus, is also given as September.[34]

This last month, Malophorios, refers to the epithet of Demeter Malophorus. When used of Demeter, the epithet appears unique to the Megarian cities, found in Byzantium, Megara, Selinus in Sicily, and Callatis. According to Pausanias, it was connected to pasturage, since those who invented it raised sheep in the area.[35] Another possibility is that the goddess was an apple divinity, the name deriving from a Doricism of the word μῆλον, 'apple'.[36] Either interpretation finds etymological support, since the word *melon* can refer to both apples and goats or sheep. Thea Malophorus is also found at the Ionian Anchilaos (Pomerie), on the west coast of the Black Sea near Mesembria. For this etymology to work we require a specifically Doric change from eta to alpha.[37] Velkov therefore argued that the epithet referred to sheep, finding its etymological derivation in the word μαλλός, 'fleece'.[38] Yet *phoros* goes naturally with fruit, while to be connected with sheep its meaning must be altered from 'bearer' to something like 'tender'. The former is apparent in Demeter's common epithet Καρποφόρος, 'fruit bearer', which among other places is attested near Byzantium on a dedication from Kios in Bithynia.[39] Malophorus was probably simply the Doric version of Karpophoros. If this is correct, and Malophorus did refer to an apple goddess, then the month would naturally have fallen in September, as it does in the *Lib. Gloss.*, corresponding with the autumn harvest.[40] The festival of the Malophoria would thus have been a fruit-harvest festival, and the synchronism with September/October given by the *Lib. Gloss.* accords with the autumn apple harvest, supporting Hanell's argument that these correspondences are correct.

[34] Hanell (1932) 21–7 for these points; cf. Avram (1999) 29. [35] Paus. 1.44.3.

[36] Hanell (1934) 175–6. [37] *IGBulg* I^2 370 (2).

[38] Velkov (1961)—French *resumé*; Velkov (1980) 117–24. [39] *IKios* 27.

[40] Mantzoulinou-Richards (1986) 19–20 argues that the goddess was connected with sheep-shearing, but discounts the criticism that it would be illogical to shear sheep in September, after the summer had ended. On this see Ehrhardt (1983) 167.

Further proof to support this is found in evidence for the Byzantine New Year. The beginning of the year, when elected officials who served annually left office, varied from place to place, but was typically aligned with one of the two solstices (summer or winter), or the autumn or spring equinox (Trümpy 1997: 1). The Athenian year began in Hekatombaion, the first new moon after the summer solstice, while the Elean and Boeotian calendars began on the winter solstice. Bithynia, we have seen, also began its New Year at the time of the winter solstice. At Phocis the year began on the autumn equinox, whereas Miletus used the spring equinox.[41] There is no direct evidence for the Byzantine New Year. Hanell suggested Heraios, October, as the first new moon after the autumn equinox. This was drawn on the basis of an analogy with the Bithynian calendar, which started in October, but was little more than a guess—he noted that the summer solstice was equally plausible.[42] Trümpy thought that the year began with Petageitnios in November/December.[43] Recent work on the inscriptions of Callatis may by analogy support Hanell's view. A Callatian inscription, dated to Malophorios, which in Callatis as in Byzantium probably fell just before Heraios, details the replacement of the outgoing committee of *εἰσαγωγείς* ('introducers') associated with that year's eponymous *basileus*, with a new group associated with another *basileus*: 'In the kingship of Agathos Daimon, in the month Malophorios . . . the introducers led by Herakles son of Androsthenes registered in their place the introducers for the year when Heraion son of Hikesios was *basileus* (in the month of . . . [Heraios?])'.[44] This inscription strongly suggests that Malophorios was the last month in the calendar of Callatis, as the month when public officials who served annually left office, and that Heraios was therefore the first month (although the name of the month must be restored from Byzantium's calendar). Avram extends this conclusion to Byzantium, upholding Hanell's suggestion that Heraios was the first month of the Byzantine calendar.[45]

[41] Hannah (2005) 72–81; *RE* X s.v. Kalender col. 1569.

[42] Hanell (1932) 27, (1934) 194, with n. 1; cf. Samuel (1972) 88, remaining non-committal.

[43] Trümpy (1997) 149–50.

[44] *ISM* III 38: *ἐπὶ βασιλέος Ἀγαθοῦ Δαιμονος μηνὸς Μαλοφορίου . . . οἱ <ϵ>ἰσαγωγεῖς οἱ περὶ Ἡρακλέοντα Ἀνδροσθένεος ἀντενέγραψαν τοὺς εἰσαγωγεῖς τοὺς ἐπὶ βασιλέος Ἡραίωνος τοῦ Ἱκεσίου μη-.*

[45] Avram (2000) 111 and (1999) 26.

This is convincing, so long as we assume that the beginning of the year in Byzantium fell at the same time as in Callatis. There is, however, a danger of assuming identical situations in different *poleis* because they belonged to the same colonial network. To continue the analogy with Callatis: the local Callatian associations of Dionysus were closely modelled on the structure of that city's public institutions. Their decrees were passed using the same formulae as decrees of the assembly, citing the month and president of the assembly, and dated by the city's eponymous magistrate.[46] Likewise, a local association of Dionysus Kallon at Byzantium appears to have been modelled in the image of public institutions, though we have less evidence of its activities than for the associations of Callatis. Each relevant Byzantine thiasic document dates according to the *hieromnamon* (the eponymous magistrate) in office at Byzantium, and three cite the month in which their decisions were taken. These documents, *IByz* 30–5, are all concerned with honouring prominent members of the thiasos who had honourably discharged their functions. The use of aorist participles to describe the activities of these honorands shows that their offices were not lifetime roles, but that they had successfully discharged their duties and had now ceased to hold office.[47]

Two of these documents are exactly contemporary, *IByz* 30 and 31, falling in the year when the emperor Domitian was *hieromnamon*, and both date to the month Bosporios. But the third document to preserve a month name, *IByz* 33, which dates to the year when the goddess Hera was *hieromnamon* (sometime in the second century AD), attests this same month, Bosporios. This month, corresponding to June in the *Lib. Gloss.*, is only found at Byzantium. It may not be coincidence that the same month is given by inscriptions from two separate years, if the month and its festival, the Bosporia, was annually taken as an opportunity to celebrate the association's officials for the past year.[48] If so,

[46] *ISM* III 35, 36, 42–6 (thiasic decrees), with Avram's comments on pp. 98 and 292. Cf. Avram (2002) 71 and Chiekova (2008) 88–9.

[47] *IByz* 30.11–12: *γυμνασιαρχήσαντα πολυτελῶς καὶ καλῶς*; *IByz* 31.9–10: *ἱερατεύσαντα . . . λανπρῶς καὶ καλῶς*; *IByz* 32.6–7: *εὐθυνήσαντας λανπρῶς καὶ γυ[μ]νασιαρχήσαντας καὶ ἀγωνοθετήσαντας*; *IByz* 33.7–8: *γυμνασιαρχήσασαν πολυτελῶς καὶ καλῶς*; *IByz* 35.5–6: *ἀγνοθετήσασαν καὶ γυμνασιαρχήσασαν πολυτελῶς καὶ καλῶ[ς]*. See Łajtar's comments on p. 61, noting that the officials must have ceased serving in office; for the Dionysiac associations in this region of Byzantium's European *chora*, Rhegion, cf. Jaccottet (2003) no. 38, pp. 78–89.

[48] Observed by Łajtar, *IByz*, pp. 61–2.

then either the association's officials ceased serving in the month before Bosporios, Lykeios, to be honoured in the festival of the first new month of the year, Bosporios, or they lay down office at the end of Bosporios and were replaced in the following month, Latoios.

We do not know exactly how closely this Dionysiac thiasos at Byzantium modelled its structure on public institutions, but it is a reasonable assumption that its officials mirrored state officials and served for the same period, since the association's documents date according to the eponymous magistrate of the city. Furthermore, a Greek calendar based on the religious festivals of its city naturally informed the internal organization of local religious associations. So by working from the private associations to public institutions it may be suggested that state officials also laid down their office in Lykeios, to be replaced by the incoming officials in Bosporios. If correct, this would place the beginning of Byzantium's calendar in Bosporios. Bosporios is equated by the *Lib. Gloss.* with Roman June. The concordance is approximate, but the summer solstice in the northern hemisphere falls on 20/21 June: if the month began in late June and continued into July, then it fell precisely at the time of the summer solstice, supporting the synchronism with June given by the *Lib. Gloss*. It is also interesting to note that this is a unique, local month, connected to the Bosporus strait, and it would be inappropriate for other cities around the Black Sea to adopt it (with the exception of Chalcedon, or perhaps the Crimean cities at the Cimmerian Bosporus). The first month of the New Year was a special occasion, with festivals and the celebration of the previous year's officials, and it may have been chosen to celebrate the city's peculiar association with the Bosporus discussed in Chapter 1.2; that is, the city's inhabitants utilized their festival calendar to express their special relationship with the strait.

It has been suggested that a Thracian goddess was honoured at this festival. The month Bosporios was connected to the festival of the Bosporia, attested on an inscription which was found in Beltalimanı on the European coast of the Bosporus. The inscription records the victory of the young boy Olympiodorus in the torch race at the Bosporia, and the dedication of the prize to Hercules and Hermes, the gods of the gymnasium:

Ὀλυμπιόδωρος Μενδιδώρου στεφανωθεὶς τᾷ λαμπάδι τῶν ἀνήβων τὰ Βοσπόρια τὸ ἆθλον Ἑρμᾷ καὶ Ἡρακλεῖ.

> Olympiodorus son of Mendidorus, having been crowned in the torch race of those boys who have not yet reached manhood (*τῶν ἀνήβων*) at the Bosporia (has dedicated) the prize to Hermes and Heracles.[49]

We know little about this festival except that its name was connected to Byzantium's position on the Thracian Bosporus. This was the source of various other names at Byzantium: a Bosporeum is mentioned in the document in Demosthenes' *De Corona* as the place where the Byzantines erected statues in honour of Athens, and a harbour called the Bosporion is mentioned in Stephanus of Byzantium.[50] Names compounded upon Bosporus were, as we saw in Chapter 1.2, a local onomastic habit connected to the Byzantines' identification with the strait. Very likely, the festival was taken as an occasion on which to celebrate the bounty which the Bosporus provided the city.

One such 'Bosporus' name is attested on a funerary *stele*: *Βοσπ-*, the son of Hekatodorus. The full name should be restored as Bosporichos or Bospon.[51] From the various items depicted in the relief on the son of Hekatodorus' inscription, Robert inferred some details of the deceased's character and life: books, pen, inkwell, tablets, and other instruments of study seem to evoke the intellectual side of the man's life, while a crown suggests that he was the victor in some athletic contest, presumed to be a torch race from the depiction of a torch-holder. The attributes of Hermes, the god of the gymnasium, are represented by a sceptre with a crescent moon on top (the *caduceus*, the herald's staff), and Robert connected this torch race to that of the Bosporia, in which Olympiodorus also dedicated his prize to Hermes and Heracles.[52] Another inscription, found in Gazioura in the Pontus, may also reference the Bosporia at Byzantium: it is a dedication to Hermes by the victor in a torch race, either set up by a Byzantine or referring to the torch race which took place at Byzantium, presumably at the Bosporia.[53]

But what god or gods were worshipped at the Bosporia? Hermes and Heracles are simply invoked as the patrons of the gymnasium, fitting for the victor in a torch race, not as the gods to whom the

[49] *IByz* 11. [50] Dem. 18.91; Steph. Byz. s.v. *Βόσπορος*.

[51] *IByz* 290. [52] Fıratlı-Robert, 150–9, esp. 152; cf. Łajtar, *IByz* pp. 204–05.

[53] *SEG* XIII 539: *Ἀν[τι]φι[λ]ί[δης] Ἀντιφιλ[ίδο]υ Βυζάντιον παῖδας λαμπάδι νικῶν Ἑρμεῖ*. See Łajtar, *IByz*, p. 40 and Robert in Fıratlı-Robert, 154; cf. J. and L. Robert, *BE* 1955: 232; 1958: 321.

Fig. 5.1. Demeter holding torch, Byzantium. 9.91g. Heberden Coin Room. With permission of the Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford.

festival was held in honour.[54] The goddess Bendis was a Thracian divinity, often associated by the Greeks with Artemis, and honoured at a torch race. An inscription from Laurion in Attica preserves a dedication to Bendis made by a Thracian called Daos, the victor in this torch race.[55] On various Byzantine coins, moreover, we find the depiction of a goddess, usually assumed to be Artemis, holding two torches.[56] It is an easy leap to make on the basis of this evidence that Bendis, the Thracian goddess, was identifiable and interchangeable with the Greek goddess Artemis, and that it was this goddess, worshipped under either guise by both Greeks and Thracians, who was honoured at the Bosporia—evidence of a high level of Thracian influence on the city, which included participation in the city's festivals.[57] Fıratlı used this to support his 'Thracian city' hypothesis.[58] His conclusion was also based on the fact that the father of Olympiodorus, Mendidorus, possesses a theophoric name for Bendis.[59]

[54] Cf. Arnakis (1955) 176–7. [55] *SEG* XXXIX 210.

[56] Schönert-Geiss II, 1454–5, 1528, 1568, 1638, 1667, 1691.

[57] Hanell (1934) 186–7 identified Bendis as the goddess worshipped at the Bosporia.

[58] Fıratlı-Robert, 45; cf. 26–7, 37. But cf. Figure 5.1: Demeter holding torch.

[59] See Masson (1988), Łajtar, *IByz*, pp. 39–40, Detschew (1957) 49–51, Parisakki (2007) 149, and Robu (2010/2011)290. Łajtar notes in his commentary that the particular form Mendidorus is not elsewhere attested, but cites an inscription from Samothrace, probably relating to a Byzantine, which has been restored to read [ὁ δεῖνα Βε]ωδιδώρου: *ISamothrace* 27.55, with Robert, *Gnomon* 35 (1963) 64–5, and Masson (1988) 7.

However, the fact that this man possessed a theophoric name does not necessarily prove that Bendis was connected to the Bosporia. It would be too happy a coincidence if the only winner of a torch race in honour of Bendis whose name survives for us today should be the son of a man named after her. The name of the festival is significant in this connection. As outlined above, it is part of a family of names formed from the name of the Bosporus, referring to Byzantium's location, and was connected to the group of epichoric personal names compounded on Bosporus.[60] If the name of the festival was epichoric, it is likely that the god in whose honour it was held was also epichoric: Bendis, as a local Thracian goddess, is one possibility.

Yet Bendis, it is worth noting, is nowhere explicitly mentioned on a Byzantine document, and her existence is always inferred on the basis that she was associated with Greek Artemis (or some other goddess). In favour of the identification is the fact that the month Artemisios fell in Byzantium in April, while Bendidios in Bithynia, on the other side of the strait, also fell in April. However, it does not require that Byzantium was a 'Thracian city' for Bendis to have been equated with Artemis. As Robert notes, the cult of Bendis was officially introduced at Athens in the fifth century BC, but none would call Athens a 'Thracian' city.[61]

It may be possible to discover the divinity in whose honour the Bosporia was held from the name of the festival. According to Stephanus of Byzantium, the toponym Bosporion, a harbour of Byzantium, became by deformation Phosphorion, a name which was connected to the legendary events which took place during the siege of Philip II in 340. Hecate Phosphorus was said to have lit up the night sky, revealing to the inhabitants of the city Philip's attempts to take the city secretly during the night, and the Phosphorion thus took its name from the goddess.[62] Hesychius gives a similar story, saying that the Byzantines dedicated a statue to Hecate 'the lamp carrier' (*λαμπαδηφόρον*) for saving the city during the siege by lighting all the lamps on the walls.[63] The goddess Phosphorus, who was connected to torches, was alternatively Artemis, according to Dionysius.[64] This

[60] On this family of names, cf. Chapter 1.2, p. 37, with references cited *ad loc.*

[61] Fıratlı-Robert, 152, criticizing Fıratlı's identification of the goddess with Bendis; for Bendis in Athens, cf. Nilsson (1960), Parker (1996) 170–4, and Pache (2001).

[62] Steph. Byz. s.v. *Βόσπορος*. See the discussion by Robert in Fıratlı-Robert, 155.

[63] *FGrHist* 390 F 1.27: *λαμπαδηφόρον Ἑκάτης ἀναστήσαντες ἄγαλμα.*

[64] Dion. Byz. 36: *τέμενος Ἀρτέμιδος Φοσφόρου.* On this question, cf. Fıratlı-Robert, 155–9, Hanell (1934) 185–6, Schönert-Geiss II, 35–6, and Chiekova (2008) 173–4.

Phosphorus may be the goddess represented on the coins carrying torches, and fits with a divinity honoured at a torch race.

Whether the goddess was Artemis or Hecate (or both) we cannot say. Artemis was worshipped under another epithet at Byzantium: Orthosia.[65] At Megara Artemis was honoured as both Orthosia[66] and Soter.[67] As Soter she was worshipped as the protectress of the city: when Megara was attacked by the Persians, this goddess was said to have turned day into night, causing the Persians to panic and fire their arrows off into the darkness, leaving them defenceless when light returned. Loukopoulou argued that both epithets referred to the same goddess, since one of the documents attesting Artemis Orthosia connects her to the ramparts of the city.[68] According to Loukopoulou, Orthosia was simply the archaic epithet of Soter, both referring to Artemis as 'protectress' of the city. From Megara, she then argued, these epithets came to Byzantium, where a third variant arose in relation to the siege of Philip II: Phosphorus—three epithets for the same goddess, all divine protectresses.[69] Loukopoulou's suggestion cannot be proved or disproved, but it reveals the possibility for one goddess to be worshipped under a number of interchangeable epithets, increasing the likelihood that Bendis may also have been attached to her worship. The association of Artemis or Hecate as 'protectress', arising from the siege of the city, is also reflected on the coins of the city which carry a star and moon, alluding to the light which shone during that night (see Fig. 5.2).[70] On Severan coins, minted after Septimius Severus had restored the city after reducing it, we find Severus offering a sacrifice before a torch, with the legend *ktisis* in the exergue. These coins, connected with the re-foundation of the city, were meant to associate the city's new founder and protector (its erstwhile destroyer) with the city's divine protectress.[71] They evoke, once again, the relationship between the 'protectress' and torches. Hecate, Artemis, or both may therefore have been worshipped at the Bosporia as the lamp-carrying goddesses, but there is no reason that either of these goddesses could not be worshipped as Bendis by the native Thracians if they chose to do so.

[65] Hdt. 4.87.2. [66] *IG* VII 113; Robert, *Coll. Froehner* 22, no. 15.
[67] Paus. 1.40.2–4; cf. Robert in Fıratlı-Robert, 157.
[68] *IG* VII 113.2: *Ἄρτεμιν Ὀρθωσίην πόλεως περὶ τείχεα πάντα.*
[69] Loukopoulou (1989b) 106–8. [70] Schönert-Geiss II, 1315–17.
[71] Schönert-Geiss II, 1466–7, with the comments on pp. 35–7.

Fig. 5.2. Star and Crescent, Byzantium. 6.53g. Heberden Coin Room. With permission of the Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford.

Against this interpretation it must be noted that Bendidios in Bithynia fell in September, not June (the month connected with Bosporios), and we know that Byzantium already possessed Artemis festivals in September and March. Moreover, the association with Phosphorus depends purely on the fact of a torch race held during the Bosporia, and that Bendis was honoured in the torch race at Athens. This does not prove that the goddess in whose honour the festival was held was the 'lamp-carrying' divinity. A lamp-carrying, saviour goddess need not have been limited in her functions to the siege of Philip II. A goddess named Phosphorus, 'light-carrier', formed by deformation from the name Bosporus, could also have served as a protectress by shining lights to lead sailors through the treacherous strait.[72] One of Dionysius' explanations for the name Phosphorus is that the epithet derived from a nearby lighthouse.[73] Such a function will have served to make the treacherous strait safe, and fits well with the Byzantines' identification as 'common benefactors', responsible for maintaining free sea lanes for Greek trade, explaining the connection between the protectress goddess with the festival of the Bosporia.

Byzantium's calendar is also significant for the information it provides on the colonial milieu to which Byzantium belonged. Various

[72] Cf. Dionysius' account of the lighthouse at Timaea, discussed in Section 5.3.
[73] Dion. Byz. 78.

months from Chalcedon, Chersonesus Taurica, Mesembria, and especially Callatis, the Dorian-Megarian cities in the Black Sea, are known from inscriptions. When Byzantium's months are compared to these there is a striking degree of similarity, which has been taken as confirming that these cities shared the same mother-city: Megara.[74] From Chersonesus Taurica, five months are known, all but one of which, Herakleios, correspond to months known from Byzantium.[75] From Callatis eight months are known, and again only one, Apellaios, does not correspond to a Byzantine month.[76] Five months are known from Chalcedon, only two of which, Apellaios and Potamios, do not correspond to Byzantium's calendar.[77] Finally, a single month is preserved from Mesembria, which is also found at Byzantium: *Ἀρτεμίσιος*.[78] Of Byzantium's calendar, only four months are not found in these cities: *Βοσπόριος*, *Ἀγριάνιος*, *Ἡραῖος*, and *Καρνεῖος*. For Hanell, the similarities between the calendars of these cities were decisive in placing Byzantium within a 'Megarian colonial network', and he called further debate of the issue 'quite superfluous' ('ziemlich überflüssig').[79]

These parallels demonstrate the existence of a common cultural milieu to which these cities belonged and a heritage in which they shared and which goes back to Megara. But the situation is not simple, and we are not dealing with identical calendars repeated in each city. Potamios, the Chalcedonian month, did not exist at Byzantium, and Apellaios, a common Dorian month which is found in both Callatis and Chalcedon, and probably by extension existed in Chersonesus and Heraclea, did not exist at Byzantium. So while Byzantium possessed cultural connections with Heraclea and Chalcedon, it went its own way with a number of its months. This suggests that Byzantium's calendar and the cults to which the

[74] For comparisons of Byzantium's months with these other cities, cf. Hanell (1934) 190–2; Trümpy (1997) 149–50; Avram (2000) 110–15, (1999); Smith (2008) 124–5.

[75] *IOSPE* I² 352.56; 357.24–5; 358.12; 359.19; 361.4–5; 402.7; *SEG* XLVI 930: *Διονύσιος*, *Εὐκλεῖος*, *Ἡρακλεῖος*, *Λατοῖος*, and *Λυκεῖος*.

[76] *ISM* III 2.20; 6.2; 10.1; 12.2; 19.4; 30.3; 35.2; 38.2; 44.2, 40; 47.2: *Μαχανεύς*, *Πεταγείτνιος*, *Διονύσιος*, *Εὐκλεῖος*, *Ἀρτεμίτιος*, *Λυκεῖος*, *Ἀπελλαῖος*, and *Μαλοφόριος*.

[77] *IKalch* 6.2; 7.7; 10.7–8; 12.19–20, 27: *Ἀπελλαῖος*, *Διονύσιος*, *Μαχάνειος*, *Πεταγείτνιος*, and *Ποτάμιος*.

[78] *IGBulg* I² 39.2.

[79] Hanell (1934) 192, 203; cf. also Trümpy (1997) 151 who follows this view. See also Avram (1999) 26–8. For an alternative view of Megarian 'colonization', cf. Chapter 6.

months relate were not imposed in their entirety at the moment of foundation by a single mother-city. The months which *were* shared between these cities do not necessarily relate back to Megara: the only actual Megarian month we know of, *Πανάμος*, is not found in Byzantium or in any of the other Megarian colonies.[80]

A more likely scenario is this. A festival calendar structured the civic year, informed the workings of local institutions, and needed to be mapped out at a specific time. However, rather than being imposed at a foundational moment, at some point the inhabitants of the Bosporus took the decision to establish a calendar: this may have happened early on, in a village or series of villages on the site of what became the *polis* of Byzantium, or later, after the Byzantines had begun to refer to their city as a *polis*, but it does not need to have happened at the moment of foundation. The festival calendar which they settled on would naturally have reflected the months and cults with which the inhabitants, including a large proportion of Megarians, were most familiar. If many of the early settlers along the Golden Horn came from Megara or descended from Megarians, then Megarian months would naturally have played an important role in the new calendar, as would what they knew of the cults and calendars of their closest friends and allies, Chalcedon, Heraclea, Callatis, etc. At the same time, the festival calendar established at this point would have allowed for local peculiarities, like the month Bosporios. Interaction between the different Dorian cities within the Black Sea, a network of peer-polity interaction, is therefore very likely to have informed the nature of the cities' respective calendars. The small number of Dorian cities in the Black Sea would naturally have looked to each other for support in the early period of their existence, then formed political alliances, economic connections, and other relationships: we know that Byzantium and Chalcedon formed a coinage alliance, that *sympoliteiai* existed between Byzantium, Selymbria, and Chalcedon, and can flesh out these connections by reference to onomastic and institutional parallels (Byzantium and Heraclea shared *hekatostyes* as divisions of their citizenries). In such a context, it would be completely natural for similarities to develop within the relatively small group of Dorian Black Sea cities, as a

[80] *IG* VII 188.2: cf. Avram (2000) 114 and (1999) 30, arguing that the lone survival of this month is completely 'par hasard', and that if only more months were known we would see more similarities.

means of preserving the tight connections within this network, and to distinguish them from the Ionian-Milesian colonies of the Pontus. This does not mean that they possessed *identical* calendars, and to attempt reconstructions of the calendar of Megara on the basis of Byzantium's calendar, as Trümpy and Avram do, is dangerous: Megara's calendar may have been *roughly* similar to those of the Pontic colonies, but it was probably not identical.

This solves certain problems which have unnecessarily vexed scholars, for we no longer have to invent reasons which explain Byzantium's unique months or why it lacks others. For example Trümpy thought that *Βοσπόριος* must have been an innovation made some time after the foundation of Byzantium, and that *Μαλοφόριος* was substituted for Apellaios, an old Dorian month found in Chalcedon and Callatis, which she assumes must have existed at the foundation of Byzantium. Even accepting the premise that Apellaios was replaced at some stage later, which we need not, *Μαλοφόριος* is an unlikely substitute: it is one of the few months which *can* be traced back to Megara, and it is also found in Callatis. This also overlooks the fact that a month named after the city's physical circumstances would be a completely natural choice for early inhabitants or colonists, allowing them to stress a legitimating religious affinity with their environment. Similarly, both Trümpy and Avram use Byzantium's calendar to reconstruct that of Megara, choosing months to be replaced with Panamos, the *only* month we know for certain to have existed at Megara (Trümpy selects *Βοσπόριος*, Avram *Λατοῖος*). Otherwise Byzantium's calendar is simply superimposed in its entirety.[81] These solutions rest on the assumption that a mother-city imposed its calendar *in toto* upon its colonies. In fact, while the existence of shared months may reveal cultural affinities with Megara, to attempt these ambitious reconstructions (especially of the calendar of Megara) may be to misinterpret the nature of Byzantium's calendar.

The similarities between the calendars of Byzantium, Callatis, Chersonesus, Chalcedon, and Mesembria appear to have been conscious, and the cities may have hoped that these cultural similarities would serve to distinguish them from the barbarian tribes of the Black Sea, as Greek cities who could point to a shared cultural heritage and

[81] Trümpy (1997) 149–50; Avram (1999) 28; Avram (2000) 110–15, esp. 113.

shared ancestors.[82] We know, in the case of Byzantium, from the long, intentional preservation of its dialect, that it consciously self-identified as Dorian long after the *koine* had spread to the city, deliberately ascribing to this cultural heritage.[83] The situation we find on the calendar is precisely what we should expect if Byzantium's cultic practices and festival traditions were influenced by its closest neighbours along with an assortment of the earliest settlers. We therefore find a unique month, Bosporios, or the absence of Apellaios, alongside a large number of Dorian months which can be attributed to the influence of Byzantium's Dorian neighbours and the desire of the Byzantines (as well as the Chalcedonians, Heracleots, etc.) to distinguish themselves from the numerous Ionian cities which surrounded them. Like the foundational legends and the stories of Byzas, discussed in Chapter 6, a distinct Greek dialect and ethnic identity were marks of 'polishood'. Byzantium, as we have seen, was located at the last approach to the Black Sea, surrounded by hostile Thracians. Despite Polybius' praise, the Byzantines were in constant danger of being overlooked as frontier dwellers at the very edge of Greece. Amongst all the praise of the city and its site in the ancient sources, the city was also often the butt of jokes. Consequently, it is no surprise if the Byzantines overcompensated by artificially preserving their dialect long after the *koine* had spread to the city, and by selecting months for their calendar which emphasized their Dorian identity and their ancestral connections with the other Dorian-Megarian cities in the Pontus. This desire, I suggest, was strengthened because of the city's difficult relations with its Thracian neighbours. The Byzantines' desire for their city to continue to be viewed as the 'first city of Greece' caused them to actively seek to distinguish themselves from the locals.

[82] Robu (2012) 191 and (2014a) 410 notes that the relations between the Megarian cities of the Black Sea and Propontis may have strengthened into a colonial 'network' in response to the threat of barbarian tribes.

[83] Łajtar shows that in one of the city's decrees, honouring Orontes of Olbia in the first century AD (*IByz* 3), we find a kind of artificial dialect which carefully preserves several 'Doricisms' (*δᾶμος* for *δῆμος*, *στραταγοί* for *στρατηγοί*, the nominative masculine plural article *τοί*, *ποτί* for *πρός*, infinitives ending in *–μεν*) characteristic of the city's dialect, alongside various expressions not typically Doric (*χρήας*, *πλήονας*), and the form *διανεκεῖ*, retaining the alpha of *δια–*, instead of the more usual *διηνεκεῖ*. For these points, see Łajtar's comments on p. 28, who notes that 'Die Sprache des Dekrets ist künstlich dorisiert'. On this self-conscious 'Greekness', cf. Dana (2013), who (at pp. 30–1) suggests that classical Athens served as a model of Greek learning and culture for foreign notables from Byzantium.

This was done, in part, by emphasizing Greek cultural and religious practices in preference to local Thracian customs, and using them to draw attention to their relationship with one or more of the great colonizing *poleis* of archaic Greece. From this perspective, it is not surprising that there is little observable Thracian influence on the calendar; in fact, that was probably the point. But this does not mean that the Thracians were not well integrated in civic life at Byzantium.

5.3 INHABITANT THRACIANS

In 400 BC the Ten Thousand led by Xenophon arrived in Bithynia. The satrap of Hellespontine Phrygia, Pharnabazus, would not permit them to remain in his territory, and they were ferried across to Byzantium. Here Cleandros was Spartan harmost, and Anaxibius, navarch of the Spartan fleet, who had as his headquarters the Golden Horn, had promised to employ the Ten Thousand.[84] When Anaxibius reneged on his word, a skirmish took place before the city between the Spartan garrison and the Ten Thousand. Anaxibius closed the gates and instructed the mercenaries to take what provisions they needed from the Thracian villages around Byzantium, fearing that the populace might join with the mercenaries to drive out the Spartans (so Newskaja). Xenophon's soldiers, outraged at this treatment, broke into the city; the people prepared for flight.[85] The mercenaries came close to plundering the city, and offered to proclaim Xenophon a tyrant.[86] An impassioned speech by Xenophon restored order. He pleaded to the soldiers, who had refrained in the past from plundering barbarian cities, not to plunder the first Greek city to which they came (Ἑλληνίδα δὲ εἰς ἣν πρώτην ἤλθομεν πόλιν).[87] The crisis was eventually averted when Seuthes II hired the soldiers to help reclaim territory in Thrace.

The dubious honour of being the first Greek city meant that Byzantium was also the last—beyond it to the west lay Thracian tribes and the kingdom of Odrysia, to the east Bithynia and the Persian Empire. Xenophon's account of his time at Byzantium is of a frontier

[84] Xen. *An.* 7.1, and see Merle (1916) 33.
[85] Xen. *An.* 7.1.17–19.
[86] Xen. *An.* 7.1.21; cf. Newskaja (1955) 106.
[87] Xen. *An.* 7.1.29. For the narrative: Merle (1916) 33 and Newskaja (1955) 106–7.

city; an outpost of Hellenic civilization surrounded by hostile foreign elements, with a privileged Greek elite atop a Thracian underclass living outside the city, in the villages of Byzantium's territory. Anaxibius, in an attempt to reconcile the mercenaries, advised them to get their provisions from the Thracian villages in the *chora*: 'Get (λαμβάνετε) your supplies from the Thracian villages (ἐκ τῶν Θρᾳκίων κωμῶν); there is an abundance of barley and wheat and other supplies'.[88] The soldiers are expected to treat this as a ready and freely available supply.[89] Moreover, the soldiers are assembled in formation in a square called the Thrakion, overlooked by 'the Thracian gates'.[90] This area seems to have been located just southwest of the ancient Akropolis, Topkapı Palace, above the area today housing the complex of Hagia Sophia.[91] It is not clear whether the square was so named because this was the district of the city where the Thracians lived, or because it was here that the Byzantines assembled whenever the city was attacked by Thracian tribes.

This same overall impression is given by a fragment of Phylarchus, who says that the native Bithynians living in the Asiatic territory of Byzantium were enslaved by the Greeks and fulfilled a role similar to that of the helots at Sparta, agricultural serfs.[92] This refers not to the Thracians of the European side of the Bosporus, but to the Bithynians on its eastern shore, in Byzantium's domains in Asia. The implication is of a rigid dichotomy between the Greek residents of the *astu* and their Thracian-Bithynian neighbours.[93] Yet Phylarchus' helot comparison cannot be pushed very far. Similar situations, which are described by literary sources as resembling the Spartan-helot dynamic, are known in other cities outside Sparta, including the Mariandynoi at Heraclea Pontica and the Thessalian Penestai. These fall into a group characterized by Pollux (probably going back to Aristophanes of Byzantium) as lying 'between liberty and slavery'.[94] Unlike chattel

[88] Xen. *An.* 7.1.13 (transl. Brownson, Loeb).

[89] Isaac (1986) 228 emphasizes the use of the word λαμβάνετε, 'take', not 'buy'. It may, however, be more revealing of Sparta's attitude to local non-Greek populations, not the Byzantines', for it is Anaxibius who offers this advice.

[90] Xen. *An.* 7.1.15; Xen. *Hell.* 1.3.20.

[91] See the map in Müller-Weiner (1977) 17.

[92] *FGrHist* 81 F 8.

[93] Bithynians were, to the ancients, ethnically related to the Thracians: see Corsten (2007) 121. On these Bithynian 'helots' of Byzantium, note Lotze (1959) 57–8, and Papazoglou (1997) 50–2.

[94] Poll. 3.83.

slaves, they tended to belong to the same ethnic group, descending from the original inhabitants of the land who had a long time ago been conquered and enslaved.[95] The enslavement of local populations to work as agricultural labourers on the land of their masters was a practice particularly widespread among Greek cities in the Black Sea, notably at Istros, Olbia, Panticapaeum, Chersonesus, and Callatis, and resembles the *laoi* known from Hellenistic Asia Minor, for example at Priene and Cyzicus.[96] At Sparta the helots, and the perennial threat they posed, were at the heart of that city's peculiar social system; yet it is highly unlikely that so pervasive a system existed at Byzantium.

Public slaves did exist at Byzantium, attested in two inscriptions where the names of the slaves are given without a patronym, and followed by the ethnic of the city in the genitive plural. The father is left out because in legal terms slaves had no father: *Ἀντίγονος Βυζαντίων* and *Θαλλίων Βυζαντίων* are recorded together on a funerary *stele* dating to the first or second centuries AD, and *Ἐπαφρόδιτος Βυζαντίων* in the late Hellenistic period.[97] These need not be connected to the Bithynian serfs mentioned by Phylarchus, since public slaves described in this way are found elsewhere and were probably a regular feature in other cities.[98] Neither, it is worth noting, do they possess Thracian or Bithynian names. De Ste. Croix, noting the unparalleled practice of the Spartans to begin every year by declaring war against the helots, warned us not 'to make the mistake of thinking that certain other peoples resembled the Spartan Helots closely, either in their legal status or in their actual condition, simply because certain Greek writers came near to identifying them'.[99] Although other cities made use of indigenous populations as agricultural serfs, only at Sparta was the gulf between helots and Spartiates so wide, and the attendant risk of slave revolts so extreme, that the entire social and political structure was predicated upon the dichotomy. Sparta was

[95] Garlan (1988) 87; for treatments of this category of servitude, cf. Lotze (1959); Finley (1964); Luraghi (2009).

[96] Pippidi (1975c).

[97] *IByz* 242, 313, with Łajtar's comments on p. 176; cf. Robert in Fıratlı-Robert, 159 on public slaves.

[98] Larisa in Thessaly (*IG* IX 2, 871); Kolophon (*CIG* II 2036); Delos (*IDelos* 1764); Cyrenaica, where according to Robert the slave belonged to a society of *publicani* of Apollonia: Robert (1968) 436–8, and see Łajtar, *IByz*, p. 176 for these examples. Public slaves also existed at Athens, for example the Scythian archers.

[99] De Ste. Croix (1981) 148–9; cf. also (1972) 90–1.

unique, even if the institution of 'helotage', taken alone, was not.[100] It would be a mistake to conclude without further evidence that the Byzantine political and social system was predicated on institutionalized serfdom and the subordination of the local Thracians to their Greek masters, since there is no reason to believe that anywhere other than Sparta was the situation pushed to such an extreme.[101] The Bithynian 'helots' cannot be taken as evidence for an unbreachable divide between the Greek and Thracian inhabitants of Byzantium—Phylarchus is referring to a small population of Bithynians, not Thracians, captured in war under specific circumstances.[102]

As argued previously, Byzantium's cults and calendar suggest a conscious attempt to establish the city's Hellenic credentials as an 'outpost of Hellenism' amidst a sea of non-Greek Thracians, and they provide little clear evidence of Thracian influence on the city's religious life.[103] Yet Polybius' description of regular raids on Byzantine territory was not unique, and Byzantium was not the only city in the Black Sea which had to contend with bellicose non-Greek neighbours. The situation outlined by Polybius—the constant destruction of the Byzantines' crops, the constant but ineffectual recourse to bribery—is confirmed in substance at Istros (Histria), on the west coast of the Pontus in Scythia, in a famous decree honouring Agathocles the son of Antiphilos for various services to the city.[104] Agathocles' conduct in the city's relations with its Thracian neighbours, the Getae, reveals numerous affinities with the Byzantine situation. At a time of distress for the city, when the Thracians were attacking it and threatening the animals which were kept on the lands, we learn that Agathocles was appointed 'captain of the archers' (*toxarchos*), and, taking a few hired troops, successfully resisted the Thracians (ll. 8–14). At a later point when Bizone was besieged, Agathocles was chosen as ambassador and placated the Thracian chieftains with a bribe of 6,000 pieces of gold.

[100] For the debate on Spartan 'otherness', cf. Finley (1968), and recently Hodkinson (2009b), with Hansen (2009).

[101] Cf. Newskaja (1955) 64; cf. 56–9. This work is littered with similar sentiments: pp. 5–6, 18, 31, 43, 44–6, 166–8.

[102] On the possible circumstances, cf. Chapter 3.3.

[103] To borrow the title of a monograph on Heraclea Pontica: Burstein (1976).

[104] *ISM* I 15. The decree is discussed in detail in Pippidi (1975b). For other examples of honours to local *euergetai* who served as the representatives of the city in dealings with neighbouring barbarians, note also *ISM* I 8.3–13; 15.14–18; 54.44–6 (all Istros) and *IOSPE* I^2 32 (Olbia), with Anghel (1999/2000).

By this device he secured for the Istrians the control of the harvest. Various other embassies to Thracian chieftains are described, demonstrating that one recourse in this situation was bribery. Polybius' testimony that it was not possible to find any permanent solution through concessions is thus validated by the number of such expeditions. Moreover, his claim that the explicit object of these Thracian raids was to destroy the Byzantines' harvest is also vindicated, for this was the goal of the Getae at Istros.

However, it is naïve to believe that such a decree, in its monumental context, was not intended to present a specific kind of relationship between the Getae bandits and the Greek Istrians. Honorary inscriptions like that of Agathocles represent the collective expression of a community's will. They are performative; their point is exhibition. To set up the *stele* was a powerful, public expression of the community's support for particular actions and traits. If those traits helped to swell the community's civic pride by highlighting its heroic struggle against the ravenous barbarian Getae, then that is merely one expression of the city's collective identity. Epigraphic evidence is just as, if not more, prone to distortion as are our literary sources.

One passage of Dionysius, dealing with the arrival of early settlers at the Bosporus, serves a similar function as our Istrian inscription. The place named Hestiai, 'the Hearths', midway up the European coast of the Bosporus, is named, he says, for the following story:

> *κατέσχον γὰρ ἐταῦθα ταῖς ναυσὶν οἱ τῆς ἀποικίας ἡγεμόνες, ἐπειδὴ παρεξιόντες τὴν Βοσπόριον ἄκραν ὁρῶσι πολλῷ πλήθει βαρβαρικοῦ στρατοῦ κατεχομένας τὰς ἀποβάσεις. καὶ τὰς μὲν Ἑστίας ἱδρύσαντο κατὰ πόλιν ἑκάστην ἔνθα πρῶτον ἀπέβησαν· ἐπεὶ δ' αἰσθάνονται τοὺς βαρβάρους κατὰ γῆν ἰόντας ἐπ' αὐτούς. ἀναμείναντες, ἄχρι πλεῖστον ἀποσπάσεαιεν ἐκείνων τῶν χωριῶν, ἐφιᾶσι τῷ ῥεύματι τὸν στόλον καὶ εἰς ἀφύλακτον ἤδη καὶ κὲνην ἀνδρῶν κατίσχουσι τὴν ἄκραν, διαστρατηγήσαντες τοὺς βαρβάρους· ἦν γὰρ τοῖς μὲν κατ' ἐπιτομὰς τῶν κόλπων οὐ πολὺς ὁ πλοῦς, τοῖς δ' ἐν κύκλῳ τῆς γῆς ἡ περίοδος. ἔνιοι δέ φασιν οὐ πόλεων, ἀλλ' οἴκων Μεγαρικῶν ἐπτ` τῶν ἀρίστων εἶναι τὰς Ἑστίας· πεπιστεύσθω δ' ὅπως ἑκάστῳ φίλον.*

For the leaders of the expedition held fast with their ships here, since as they came past the Bosporios Akra they saw that there was a great thronged barbarian army holding the landing sites. When they had set up their hearths according to the order in which each *polis* disembarked, they learned that the barbarians were coming by land against them. Waiting until most of them had left the land, they continued their

> expedition by utilizing the current to sail into and claim the now unguarded promontory, thus successfully out-generalling the barbarians. For the voyage was short because it took them along the incisions of the gulfs, while the barbarians went around in a large circle by land. Some say that the hearths were not of *poleis*, but seven of the best houses of Megara. Let each account be trusted as far as you place faith in each.[105]

The passage is a description of 'spear-won' land, wrested from natives by Greek civilizers, which establishes the Greek credentials of a settlement founded in barbarian territory. Dionysius' 'some say' and the final third-person imperative reveal the difficulty for Dionysius, writing in the imperial period, to disentangle various versions of the same event. Probably, what Byzantines remembered about the foundation of the city bore very little resemblance to the historical foundation. This account reveals instead how they *thought*, or wanted to think, the city had been founded: the landlubber barbarians, from the start, offered resistance, but the Greeks used their superior seafaring skills to 'out-general' (διαστρατηγήσαντες) the Thracians, who were confined to the land, and so won from them the promontory.[106]

This was a legitimating tactic, designed to answer imagined criticisms that the city was not 'really' Greek. Later Byzantine sources offer a similar account of early hostilities with the Thracians. In Hesychius of Miletus' *Patria Constantinopoleos* (sixth century AD), which includes an account of the legendary history of ancient Byzantium, we are told that in one aetiology for the foundation of the city Io, driven by Hera, arrived in the 'land of Thracians' where she gave birth to a daughter, Ceroessa. Ceroessa, 'exceeding in beauty of the local Thracian maidens', won the attention of Poseidon, by whom she bore Byzas, the legendary eponym of Byzantium.[107] This singles out Byzas and his descendants as distinct from and superior to the local population. Byzas is soon forced to defend the new settlement against various Thracian and Scythian attacks.[108] The Byzantines therefore defined themselves against the local population right from the start. In reality, of course, and as is argued in Chapter 6, the

[105] Dion. Byz. 53. Further discussion of this passage in Robu (2014a) 250–6, who suggests (at 252–3) that the passage provides evidence for cooperation between settlers from a number of poleis: an early *synoikismos*.

[106] Compare Thuc. 7.30: a group of Thracians is slaughtered because of an inability to swim.

[107] *FGrHist* 390 F 1.8–9.

[108] *FGrHist* 390 F 1.11, 17–18.

early relations between Thracians and Greek settlers were much more complex, consisting initially of mutual and friendly trading contacts. Indeed many of the 'Greek' foundational myths have at their core Thracian origins: the *oikistes* Byzas and his city both possess Thracian names.[109] The *stele* honouring Agathocles at Istros must be viewed in the same light—it was voted and decreed by a Greek *polis*, and set up to reinforce an identity chosen by a community which defined itself in opposition to its neighbours. Mythological stories, foundational traditions, institutions, cults, and calendars could all serve similar purposes.

One passage of Dionysius helps to illustrate the distortions implicit in such descriptions. At a spot just above European Hieron, he says, there stands on the peak of a hill descending from the summit of the rolling hills of Chrysorrhoas an elevated tower named Timaea. This tower, he says, 'is visible from the sea, used as a guide by sailors'. He goes on to describe how the tower is used by the Greeks as a lighthouse:

> ex hac turre faces ardentes noctu sublatae perferebantur, rectae viae ad Ponti ostium duces; at barbari verarum facium fidem auferebant, praetendentes ex Salmydessi littoribus fraudulentas faces, ut in errorem nautas inducerent in naufragiaque subducerent. Ora enim maritime importuossa est et maris vadum ob excessum aquarum ancoris non firum, et paratum his, qui abferrarunt a recta via, naufragium signis veris confuses cum falsis significationibus.
>
> From this tower, they used to wave burning torches during the night, guiding the best route toward the mouth of the Pontus. But the barbarians destroyed any faith in the truth of these signals, by misleading sailors along the beaches of Salmydessos to cause shipwreck. For the coast (of Salmydessos) does not contain a port, and the shallows, because of the violent flow of the waters, provide a poor anchorage, so that it presents the danger of shipwreck to those who are way led from the proper route, because they have confused the true signals with the false.[110]

Lighthouses along the Bosporus, therefore, were used by the locals to guide sailors through the strait in conditions of poor visibility. Here, allegedly, the Thracians took advantage of these dangers in order to plunder the shipwrecked sailors, by lighting their own fires at Salmydessos further west in the Black Sea, distracting sailors away from the

[109] Cf. Chapter 6.3.
[110] Dion. Byz. 77 (transl. adapted from the French version of Grélois, 175).

safe route through the Bosporus to a more dangerous area. Pierre Gilles, in his account of the Bosporus, shows that the dangers of shipwreck at this spot are very real, adding that he personally saw a ship run aground, having lost its way in the thick fog: 'I saw a ship caused to stray by the black fog of the Pontus. Driven by the north winds from the mouth of the Bosporus, it collided with a shore with no harbours, and all the shipwrecked passengers made it safely onto the shore. Meanwhile the native Thracians refrained from taking the passengers' wealth through brigandage, either because they had once been tamed by the manners of the Roman Empire, or because now they were held back by the harsh severity of their masters.'[111]

This distinction between seafaring Greeks and landlubber Thracians is also found in Polybius. In the third century, we have seen, the Byzantines were pressured by the Celtic kingdom of Tylis, established following the crossing of the Galatians into Asia at the start of the third century. They were obliged to pay tribute to this kingdom, rising to a lofty height of 80T. Unable to pay, the city began to tax Black Sea trade.[112] For Polybius, the other Greek cities were indebted to the Greeks of Byzantium as benefactors because they kept the passage to the Black Sea free until now. The Rhodians, he implies, ought to have come to the Byzantines' aid; instead they made war to force Byzantium to rescind the toll.[113] Greeks, here, are the advocates of 'free trade', providing safety for merchants and travellers; the predatory exactions of non-Greeks are responsible for endangering free trade. This is the story of Timaea blown up to a grander scale.

Dionysius' description of Timaea has the ring of plausibility because, as we saw in Chapter 1.1, these dangers were very real in the Bosporus, and thick fogs were notorious around the strait and in the Black Sea: Menander poked fun at the inhabitants who, he said, were not troubled by the thick fogs, because there was nothing particularly exciting to see. Robert has illustrated (1959: 195–6) that one spot along the southern coast of the Black Sea on the approach to the Bosporus is infamous for its resemblance to the opening of the strait. This is the peninsula of Karaburun on the Black Sea, in the northern part of Byzantium's territory at Lake Delkos. This lake in modern Terkoz, about 35 km west of the opening to the Black Sea, is located beside the shore and

[111] *De Bosporo Thracio*, 2.153–4 (Grélois 176–7).
[112] Cf. the discussion in Chapter 3.1.
[113] Pol. 4.38.1–10.

ringed by hills resembling those around the mouth of the Bosporus. The lake is connected by a narrow outlet to the shore of the Black Sea, and Robert, citing modern navigational aids, showed how dangerous the area is to ships. Until relatively recently this outlet's resemblance to the mouth of the Bosporus frequently lured sailors who, in poor weather, would sail toward the hills and unwittingly wreck their ships at this 'false' *stoma*. The *Black Sea Pilot* describes the danger:

> **Lake Derkos (Fake entrance),** the locality of which has so frequently been mistaken for the entrance of the Bosporus, is bounded to the southward by an irregular range of hills, which, bearing some resemblance to the winding, self-closing banks of the Bosporus, add greatly to its deceptive appearance in thick weather. It has been given the name of the False entrance on account of the numerous mistakes occurring under the supposition that it is the true entrance of the Bosporus, an error frequently resulting in shipwreck. . . . Here is the outlet of the lake, the mouth of which is frequently closed during the summer months.[114]

Today a lighthouse exists at the spot to warn ships of this danger and keep them from the dangerous shoreline. The modern Turkish name for the peninsula, Karaburun, 'Black Cape', is connected to the infamy of this dangerous spot.

Precisely the same purpose was served by an ancient sanctuary located in the peninsula, known from a series of five inscriptions. Three were discovered here, one in Istanbul. They are dedications to a hero named Stomianos, a local heroic divinity depicted in Thracian style, which Robert linked to the peninsula at Karaburun. The other, *IByz* 28, was found in Ahtopol, ancient Agathopolis. However, it probably originally came from Karaburun and was moved at some earlier time. Two of the stones carry a relief depicting a mounted rider galloping to the right; one of them holds a phial and stands before an altar, the other brandishes a spear in his right hand.[115] Probably, the stones all came from the same sanctuary devoted to this hero, whose epithet resembles an ethnic form of a place called *Στόμα*, 'mouth'.[116] The only actual 'mouth' nearby is that of the Pontus or the Bosporus, suggesting that this was a hero honoured as the protector of ships sailing into or out of the Bosporus. Not only this, but the hero was also associated with the 'false' mouth of Lake Delkos, and was propitiated to protect sailors from running

[114] *BSP* 135; cf. 132. [115] *IByz* 25–9, with Łajtar's comments on p. 58.
[116] Łajtar, *IByz*, p. 58; Robert (1959) 195; cf. Vlahov (1982) 362.

aground here—the divine avatar of an ancient lighthouse belonging to this hero's sanctuary.[117] The two functions are not mutually exclusive: the same hero could quite easily have been honoured for protecting sailors exiting and entering the Bosporus, while simultaneously warding danger away from those approaching the 'false' entrance.

The importance of these dedications is that they reveal the more complex reality behind Dionysius' simplistic stereotype. Stomianos, a divinity with responsibility for the safety of sailors, is depicted in Thracian style, as a typical Thracian mounted rider, representations of which are well known from Bulgaria. Far from Dionysius' depiction of opportunistic Thracians who took every chance to endanger Greek sailors, Greeks *and* Thracians cooperated to protect ships in dangerous conditions by administering lighthouses at treacherous spots, and shared in the worship of this hero. The case of Heros Stomianos is a warning not to allow ourselves to be taken in by the prejudices of our Greek sources. Like Dionysius, Polybius was a Greek, and like him found it natural to envisage the Byzantines' relations with the Thracians as one of conflict.

Fıratlı's other main piece of evidence in support of his argument that Byzantium was in fact a 'Thracian city' was the occurrence of the Thracian mounted rider, 'cavalier', on Byzantine funerary *stelai*. The mounted rider was a typically Thracian motif, and its adoption on Greek graves, or the assimilation of Greek artistic styles and Thracian motifs, is suggestive of a high degree of social harmony between the two peoples.[118] Yet Robert, criticizing Fıratlı's argument, noted that Fıratlı could identify only four examples of this motif, out of a total of 220 reliefs in 1964.[119] These may even have come from a single sanctuary to some Thracian hero outside the city. Moreover, he noted that only one of the *stelai*, Fıratlı-Robert no. 185, actually resembles the Thracian riding motif, with the rider mid-gallop and in a violent posture. The other three are altogether more subdued, more 'Greek': one, 'Kotys', depicts a soldier on a cantering horse followed by an attendant, the other two simply horses without a soldier. The *stele* of Kotys, the only one which carries a Thracian

[117] *RE*^{2} XI s.v. Thrake, col. 478; Robert (1959) 195–6; J. and L. Robert, *BE* 1978: 316; Vlahov (1982) 360–4; Łajtar, *IByz*, pp. 58–60; Robu (2014c) 190.

[118] On the Thracian mounted rider, and its particularly wide proliferation in Bulgaria, cf. Katsarov (1938), Pfühl and Möbius (1977–9), and Delemen (1999).

[119] Fıratlı-Robert, 26. The four Thracian 'cavaliers' are Fıratlı-Robert, nos 184 (Kotys = *IByz* 183), 185, 186 (Marcus Antonius Fronto = *IByz* 184), and 187.

name, depicts a man wearing military clothing, followed by an attendant carrying the man's weapon, and Robert thus suggested that Byzantium employed Thracian mercenaries to serve in the city's army against the constant Thracian raids, perhaps rewarding them with certain limited civic rights. This would be one of the main sources of Thracian onomastics at Byzantium, and reveals the extent and limits of Thracian influence on the city.[120] When viewed in the context of the citizenship distinctions discussed in section 5.1, the *stele* of Kotys is suggestive of the ways in which Thracians from the hinterland could participate in Byzantine public life and gain certain civic rights. Here, we see, a local Thracian man from a village, perhaps a bastard born from a mixed union, was called up to serve against the exterior tribes. Byzantium's 'Greek' identity was not constructed in opposition to such Thracians, with whom a close relationship existed, but the Thracians against whom he fought: the organized tribes of the exterior.

Thracian onomastics at Byzantium, finally, help to illustrate the level of integration of Thracians in the city. Of the hundreds of Byzantine names which are known, only a very small proportion consists of Thracian names. Some of the most common Thracian names found at Byzantium (excluding the theophoric names Mendidoros and Bendidoros) suggest that assimilation of inhabitant Thracians was a slow, difficult process. One of the most common Thracian names of all is *Βίθυς*, which is attested only once at Byzantium.[121] This name is attested hundreds of times in Thrace proper but also in central Greece.[122] It is significant that of the 211 examples in *LGPN* IV, only one comes from Byzantium, though it is found in various other Greek cities, including six attestations from Athens. This ought to reinforce the fact that onomastics are not the most reliable guide to how 'Thracian' a given city was.[123] This is also the case with the name *Κότυς*, the most recognizable of all Thracian names, attested only once at Byzantium.[124] It is also found once in

[120] Fıratlı-Robert, 133–5. [121] *IByz* 189.

[122] Detschew (1957) 66–8; Łajtar, *IByz* p. 150; s.v. *LGPN* IV.

[123] The same is true of *Δηλόπτιχος* (s.v. *LGPN* IV). On this name, cf. Detschew (1957) 129; Fıratlı-Robert, 152–3; Robu (2010/2011) 283; Loukopoulou (1989b) 205; Masson (1994) 139–40. It is another theophoric name for Bendis, formed from the name *Δηλόπτης*, her consort.

[124] *IByz* 183. For the numerous attestations of this name, cf. Detschew (1957) 258–61; Łajtar, *IByz* p. 147; Fıratlı-Robert, 168; Parissaki (2007) 201.

Selymbria, a dependency of Byzantium.[125] That it occurs only once at Byzantium is significant, for it appears in various other Greek cities geographically removed from Thrace: once in Cyrene, twice in Euboea, once at Cos, twice at Tenos, three times at Athens, once at Aegina, once at Pagai in the Megarid, and twice at Phocis (see s.v. *LGPN* I–IV). The name is also widespread outside Thrace at the Cimmerian Bosporus (s.v. *LGPN* IV).

Another interesting example is the Thracian name *Δίνις*, attested once at Byzantium.[126] Like *Bίθυς*, it is one of the most common of all Thracian names.[127] It is also cognate with Dineos, the name of a Chalcedonian general mentioned by Hesychius (*FGrHist* 390 F 1.23) who came to the aid of Byzas during the early history of the city in his battles against the local Thracians and Scythians. Like the name of Byzas himself (cf. Chapter 6.3) the legend may be a distortion of a historical, Thracian figure, who was transformed into a Chalcedonian at a later point in order to emphasize the Greek character of the city. Dineos the Thracian thus became a Greek leader of the city in its wars with the local Thracians. The name provides evidence of the important role which the native Thracians may have played in the early history of the city, discussed further in the following chapter, and which at a later date was whitewashed to aid in the creation of the city's legendary history.[128]

It is extremely rare in Byzantium to find multiple members of the same family carrying Thracian names. One example is the woman *Μοκαζοίρη*, daughter of *Δίνις*.[129] The only other example we currently possess is *Σποκης*, son of *Σποκης*.[130] This is highly significant, for it suggests that the penetration of Thracians into Byzantium was limited, and that it was rare for Thracian names to be passed down through multiple generations in a family. Prosopographic analyses by Louisa Loukopoulou have confirmed these essentials: of the total

[125] *IByz* S 44. [126] *IByz* 340.

[127] Detschew (1957) 137–8; Łajtar, *IByz* p. 237; Fıratlı-Robert, 149–50; s.v. *LGPN* IV; Parissaki (2007) 161.

[128] Robu (2014a) 280 adds that the name *Δίνεως* is a *hapax*, but suggests that it is a corruption of the more common personal name *Δ(ε)ινίας* or the genitive singular of the Thracian *Δίνις*.

[129] *IByz* 340.

[130] *IByz* 188. For the Thracian nature of this name, cf. Parissaki (2007) 248, and Fıratlı-Robert, 184, connecting it to the names of Thracian generals and dynasts. Loukopoulou (1989b) 202 notes how unusual it is, excepting these examples, for Thracian names to be repeated within a family.

number of names in the Byzantine onomasticon, Loukopoulou has calculated that only 4.4 per cent are Thracian, slightly lower than the proportion in other Propontic Greek cities.[131] This she blames on Byzantium's stringent citizenship requirements.

Some caveats must be heeded concerning the use of this onomastic evidence. The epigraphic habit at Byzantium has left only a limited number of local inscriptions, and the use of funerary *stelai* (or the minting of coins) was very likely confined to the upper classes anyway. Most of the *stelai* were discovered in the area of Byzantium's ancient necropolis, the urban centre, and the picture might be dramatically altered if we knew more about onomastics in the villages of Byzantium's territory, where Thracians may have been more likely to live. Furthermore, Thracians did not necessarily carry obviously Thracian names, especially if Greek men chose to marry Thracians whose children would probably have inherited Greek names. If these children did carry Greek names then the presence of Thracians in the city, connected by marriage to Byzantines, is obscured, as over a period of time their original Thracian names were lost. Men like Kotys, whose service in Byzantium's army is revealed on his funerary *stele*, were well integrated into the life of the city, but their descendants would not necessarily have carried Thracian names. While Robert was right, therefore, to uphold the essentially Greek character of the city, we cannot view the city's relationship with the Thracians in the simplistic terms drawn by Polybius and Xenophon. This carries the danger of buying into the picture drawn by our Greek literary sources, and ignores the various ways in which Thracians, at a village level, may have interacted with the Byzantines. One example is provided by a series of *stelai* from Selymbria, part of Byzantium's territory. The *stelai* are dedicated to the Thracian Heros Archegetas, and reveal the existence of a sanctuary to this hero, *c.*8 km north-east of the ancient village of Selymbria. They all represent a galloping mounted rider; precisely the same motif which is found on the nearby Stomianos dedications. In this case, the violence of the horse's gallop is tempered to a canter by the more restrained Greek style.[132] These *stelai* thus reveal the interaction of Thracians and Greeks within a Greek village in the *chora* of ancient Byzantium.

[131] Loukopoulou (1989a) 80; Loukopoulou (1989b) 198–207; cf. Fernoux (2004) 92–3.

[132] *IByz* S 7–16, with Łajtar's commentary; cf. Seure (1912) 582–4; Robert (1949b) 47–9.

The Stomianos dedications, however, provide good evidence that our literary and epigraphic sources give a simplified and distorted impression. Why did Dionysius create a misleading impression? He adopts a caricature because the Greek identity of the city was established in opposition to its barbarian neighbours. The fact that there is no evidence of Thracian influence on the city's festival calendar says nothing about the extent to which Thracians *in practice* were incorporated in cult and civic life. The Thracians of Dionysius and Hesychius are entirely mythical, conceptualized in order to accentuate the contrast between the 'first' Greek city and the non-Greeks of Thrace, Scythia, and beyond, with whom the Byzantines were in constant danger of being associated—as they were, we saw in Chapter 1.1, in Menander, and as they were by Stratonicus. Simultaneously, the story of the lighthouse at Timaea served the useful function of perpetuating the Byzantines' reputation as benefactors, as Greeks who took care to protect other Greek sailors and merchants from the predations of non-Greeks. Of course in reality, as the Stomianos dedications usefully illustrate, the Thracians of the villages were indistinguishable from the Greek inhabitants, and were just as concerned with keeping ships safe. In fact, the Timaea anecdote belongs to a much wider stereotype. In the Black Sea, pirates are inevitably non-Greeks—it is virtually inconceivable that Greeks, the champions of free waterways, could engage in *leisteia*, except when it could be used to blacken the reputation of a political opponent. So when Eumelus of the Bosporan kingdom sought to win over the Greek cities dotted around the coasts of the Pontus (including Byzantium), he displayed his Greek credentials by first waging a war against the barbarian Heniochi and Achaeans along the Caucasian coast, notorious pirates.[133] If the Byzantines did not prevent these barbarian predators from reaching the shores of the Bosporus and endangering Greek trade, how else could they earn their title of 'common benefactors'? It was to maintain this identity that the Byzantines perpetuated these stereotypes, constituting another level of the imagery deliberately created by the inhabitants of the Bosporus to help legitimate their role as guardians of the Bosporus strait.

[133] Diod. 20.25.2–3, with Asheri (1998), esp. 269–70, 274–5.

6

Explaining Byzantium

> This Megabazus is forever remembered by the people of the Hellespont for replying, when he was told at Byzantium that the people of Chalcedon had founded their town seventeen years before the Byzantines had founded theirs, that the Chalcedonians must at that time have been blind, for had they not been, they would never have chosen the worse site for their city when they might have had the better.[1]

It is widely assumed that Byzantium was founded sometime in the seventh century BC by Megara, or by a group of colonists led by Megarians, part of the wave of archaic colonization undertaken by Megara and Miletus in the Black Sea and the Propontis. Following on from a less intensive period of colonizing activity in the west which led to the foundations of Megara Hyblaea and its daughter-city Selinus in Sicily, Megara is generally thought to have been responsible for a small but coherent and self-contained group of Dorian colonies in the Black Sea and along its approach, interconnected by a shared cultural heritage and commercial links, and therefore distinct from the numerous Ionian Milesian colonies in the area. This group of Megarian colonies included Byzantium, Chalcedon, Astacus, Selymbria, Mesembria, Heraclea Pontica, Callatis, and Chersonesus Taurica.[2] Aside from their dialect, these cities are interconnected by

[1] Hdt. 4.144.1–2 (transl. Godley, Loeb, lightly adapted).

[2] See fundamentally Hanell (1934) Part 2, and, now, Robu (2012) and (2014a), esp. 248–92; overviews in Seibert (1963) 153–60, Graham (1982) 'The colonial expansion of Greece', *CAH* III[3], 118–22, Antonetti (1997), and Hind (1998). For Milesian colonization in the Black Sea, cf. Ehrhardt (1983). The phrase 'Megarian colonies' is used here for convenience, however inappropriate it may turn out to be. I also draw no distinction between what are described by the literary sources as 'double foundations'—Callatis and Chersonesus Taurica (colonies of Heraclea

onomastic patterns, calendars, cult practices, and roughly similar political institutions, which have all been taken as evidence that they shared the same founder. The following examination of the foundational traditions of ancient Byzantium is placed at the end of my study because the literary sources which preserve any detail about the foundation traditions are extremely late—the most detailed, Hesychius' *Patria*, dates to the sixth century AD. They are useful for understanding post-archaic Greek conceptions of colonization, and, later, the Byzantines' own concern with creating a legendary back-story for Constantinople's predecessor, but not necessarily helpful in understanding any 'historical' period of settlement.

Within our colonizing narrative, the dialect found on Byzantine inscriptions supports Megarian foundation. If Miletus and Megara were the most active colonizers in the area, as is usually assumed, then Milesian foundation is made impossible by the Byzantine Doric dialect.[3] Moreover, archaic Byzantium used an alphabet closely related or identical to the archaic Megarian alphabet, as the recent publication of a statue base dedicated at Olympia by Byzantines in the late sixth century BC reveals.[4] Two letters, Byzantine beta and epsilon, appear identical to those in use in archaic Megara, although both also resemble Corinthian forms. This makes early Megarian involvement in Byzantium certain, though Corinthians, as we shall see, are named explicitly as one of the groups involved in Byzantium's foundation.

Our earliest epigraphic document from Byzantium itself, a fragmentary distance marker and the only surviving archaic inscription from the city, is written in the eastern Ionic alphabet.[5] This is also the case with our earliest Chalcedonian inscription, likewise the only archaic document from that city.[6] Furthermore, the funerary *stelai* of two Selymbrians interred at Athens in the fifth century are written in this same Ionic lettering.[7] The traditional explanation, if these cities are to be viewed as Dorian Megarian colonies, is that by the late Archaic or early Classical period the original Megarian alphabet

Pontica) or Mesembria (a colony of Chalcedon or Chalcedon with Byzantium)—and the rest.

[3] For the dialect of Megara, cf. Köppner (1892).

[4] Hallof, Herrmann, and Prignitic (2012), esp. 218.

[5] *IByz* 42. [6] *IKalch* 30, with Łajtar, *IByz* p. 77.

[7] *IG* I[3] 1369; 1154. Selymbrian coins from the early fifth century carry the legends *ΣΑ* and *ΣΑΛ*, but there are not enough letters to decide whether the script is Doric or eastern Ionic: cf. Jeffery (1963) 366 and Loukopoulou (1989b) 159.

had been replaced by eastern Ionic, presumably under the influence of the numerous Milesian-Ionian colonies which surrounded them, and with whom Byzantium must have forged intensive trade links.[8]

One peculiarity arises in the 'freak beta' (so Jeffery) found on the earliest Byzantine coins and the statue base from Olympia. Byzantium did not begin autonomous minting until the late fifth century, at which point a long series of emissions began, all carrying the same types and legends: on the reverse an incuse square, with a cow or ox standing above a dolphin on the obverse, the legend *BY* inscribed above to denote the city's ethnic.[9] The form of the beta in these legends is exceptionally rare, resembling a gamma with an extra 'arm' on its left side, similar to the Corinthian beta which was also adopted in neighbouring Megara, and which is found on the Byzantine statue base dedicated at Olympia.[10] The use of a Corinthian beta at Byzantium has been explained as a reflection of Megara's involvement in the foundation: Corinth, which shared a border with Megara, is thought to have influenced the Megarian alphabet in other ways.[11] By the late fifth century, when the first issues of these coins began, this beta can no longer have been in use either in Megara or Byzantium, but was, as the statue base shows, in common usage at an earlier time, and would have been used on Byzantium's early iron coinage, of which no specimens survive.[12] The retention of the archaic letter into the late fifth and fourth centuries and beyond was therefore a deliberate attempt to incorporate in the city's coinage the memory of its foundation, an example of ancient connections being artificially preserved to support the Byzantines' local identity.

Byzantium's archaic script and Doric dialect thus fit easily into our colonial narrative for the Black Sea, and Megara, as the only known Dorian colonizer in the Black Sea (Corinth is not known to have founded cities in the region), fits the bill. Consequently modern

[8] So Jeffery (1963) 366; Łajtar, *IByz*, p. 77; Slavona (2009) 202.

[9] Schönert-Geiss I, 1–642.

[10] For the 'blocky' Corinthian beta, cf. Jeffery (1963) 114.

[11] For example both scripts used an epsilon resembling a normal beta, like Byzantium's: cf. Köppner (1892) 538.

[12] Jeffery (1963) 366; Schönert-Geiss I, p. 3 with n. 6; Loukopoulou (1989b) 158; cf. Newskaja (1955) 21 and, with greater caution, Miller (1897) 332. Byzantium was one of the few *poleis* which continued to use iron coinage in the fifth century: Ar. *Nub.* 249 (*σιδαρέοισιν, ὥσπερ ἐν Βυζαντίῳ;*).

treatments, with few exceptions, have operated on the assumption that Byzantium was a Megarian colony, or a 'mixed-foundation' by a group of *poleis*, chief of which was Megara. Isaac felt justified to write: 'It can, however, be concluded that Byzantion was founded sometime in the second half of the seventh century after Chalkedon and Selymbria, *undoubtedly by Megara.*'[13]

The case for Megarian foundation was fully expounded by Krister Hanell in his 1934 *Megarische Studien*, where he systematically analysed the parallels between the cults and political institutions of Megarian colonies and the metropolis. Hanell's treatment has now been updated and reappraised by Adrian Robu, whose discussion is, in many ways, considerably more nuanced than Hanell's, emphasizing collaboration and the involvement of multiple *poleis* in the foundations of colonies, exploring the role of local populations and their interactions with the colonists, and, especially, in his insistence on the importance of networks.[14] However, in other ways many of the questions asked are tied to notions of Greek colonization which have been around for a long time, and which may need to be reappraised: for example, Robu spends a lot of time establishing stages and phases of colonization, looking at dates, identifying reasons for stages of colonization, and attempting to measure the involvement of different groups of *epoikoi* in the foundation of the cities.[15] Ultimately, Robu upholds the dominant role of Megarians in Byzantium's foundation.[16] Although it is clear that in certain respects (notably its constitution) Byzantium held a unique position within the Megarian

[13] Isaac (1986) 218. My emphasis. For other examples of this position (including the view that Byzantium was a 'mixed' foundation established by a group of colonists led by Megarians), cf. Curtius (1874) 13; *RE* III s.v. Byzantion, col. 1128; Busolt, *Gr. Ges.* I^2, 473; Beloch, *Gr. Ges.^{2}* I, 257; Merle (1916) 6–7; Gerland (1933) 95; Newskaja (1955) 21; Roebuck (1959) 110; Jeffery (1963) 366; Bérard (1960) 97; Janin (1964) 10–11; Graham (1964) 15, n. 3; Schönert-Geiss I, p. 1; *PECS* 177; Müller-Weiner (1977) 16; Graham (1982) 'The colonial expansion of Greece', *CAH* III^3, 120; Malkin and Shmueli (1988) 21; *OCD*^{3} s.v. Byzantium (A.J. Graham and S. Mitchell).

[14] Robu (2014a). On collaboration between various groups of colonists (*apoikoi*, *synoikoi*, *epoikoi*), see in particular Robu (2014a) 250–6, discussing Dionysius' account of the arrival of early colonists at Hestiai, and cf. pp. 409–13. On the importance of 'networks', see Robu (2012).

[15] Note C. Antonetti's comments, reviewing Robu in *BMCR* 2015.

[16] Robu's conclusion (254–5, 282–5, 409–10) about the founders of Byzantium is that the settlement was a mixed foundation with a majority of Megarian colonists mixed among settlers from other *poleis*. This mixture of various groups of colonists is classed as a 'synoecisme primitif': Robu (2012) 182; cf. also Robu (2014c) 187.

colonial network, religious and other similarities show a pronounced Megarian influence, which if we adhere to the traditional, twentieth-century conception of an archaic Greek colony must necessarily go back to the city's foundation.[17] Hanell and most since have thus upheld Megara's important role, with the caveat that it was probably not the *only* founder, but simply the most important, explaining Byzantium's anomalies.[18] The proofs are threefold: the worship of certain divinities under characteristically Megarian epithets,[19] links between the calendar of Byzantium and those of other Megarian colonies,[20] and onomastic connections.[21] However, these arguments work only on the basis that Byzantium had a specific moment of foundation, and that it had a discernible founder or founders. They also assume that the ethnic identity professed in a city's institutions or foundational stories are reliable indicators of that city's origins, stemming ultimately from an original mother-city. In fact, and as we have seen, notions of ethnic identity are culturally constructed by the community itself. There are other reasons which can explain 'ethnic similarities', and other ways in which indicators of ethnic identity such as dialect or religion can be diffused.

In what follows I shall argue that the question 'Who founded ancient Byzantium?' is the wrong question to ask, based on an out-of-date conception of what archaic Greek colonization actually entailed. This is not to say that I am claiming Megara did not found Byzantium. Undoubtedly, Megara played an important role in Byzantium's early history, as the *nomima* reveal, but the traditional colonial narrative for the Black Sea is misleading, because it attempts to rationalize within a network of mother-city–colony relationships 'events' which were no doubt much more complex, claiming any Ionian city in the Black Sea as 'Milesian' and any Dorian city as 'Megarian'. The literary traditions for almost all these cities are confused and contradictory, while that of Byzantium, in which numerous different founders are cited by the ancient sources, is even more so, reflecting not only the city's later transformation into Constantinople, but also the fact that the notion of a foundation by

[17] The '*nomima megarika*', as they are described by Robu (2012) 189.
[18] Hanell (1934) 205–6.
[19] Hanell (1934) 84–91, 161–90; Loukopoulou (1989b) 104. Cf. Chapter 5.2.
[20] Hanell (1934) 190–2; Trümpy (1997) 147–51. Cf. Chapter 5.2.
[21] Robert (1959) 230–2; Robert in Fıratlı-Robert, 145, 166, 171–2; Masson (1994); Robu (2010/2011).

a given mother-city at a specific point in time is too simple, at least in the case of Byzantium. A more complex idea of 'foundation' is required, which can explain the problems with the literary sources, and offer an alternative way of looking at how ethnic identity, expressed in stories, dialect, calendars, institutions, cults, etc., could be disseminated among cities within networks of communal interaction, without requiring the imposition of these features by a central mother-city upon its periphery at a particular moment in time. This argument does not overlook Megara's involvement, which is undeniable; it suggests instead that the traces of Megara's involvement need never have been imposed or exported by Megara at a certain point in time, and that there are other ways for these cultural and institutional connections to have developed. By fixating on the concept of 'foundation', it is possible that many of the questions which have been asked about Megarian colonization (what date? for what purpose? in what phases?) may proceed from a faulty premise. Rather, a myriad of influences other than particular mother-cities must be considered when exploring early Greek settlement, and attempting to 'measure' the influence of one colonizer over another—Argos, Megara, Corinth—may be the wrong approach.

6.1 ANCIENT FOUNDATION NARRATIVES

In an oft-quoted passage from Herodotus book four, cited at the beginning of this chapter, Megabazus wonders why Byzantium was founded seventeen years later than Chalcedon, situated directly opposite Byzantium on the Asian side of the Bosporus.[22] A variant tradition is found in Strabo and Tacitus, which attributed this remark to the Delphic Pythia as part of an oracular response to the future founders of Byzantium, instructing them to found their city opposite 'the blind'.[23] According to Tacitus, the meaning of the oracle could be found in terms of the overall superiority of Byzantium's location: the riddle of 'the blind' pointed to the Chalcedonians, since even though

[22] Hdt. 4.144.2.

[23] Strab. 7.6.2; Tac. *Ann.* 12.63. For treatments of the ancient accounts of Byzantium's foundation, see Hanell (1934) 123–8 and Robu (2014a) 248–85.

they had arrived at the site first, and saw the advantages of the location, they decided upon the inferior spot.

The 'blindness' of the Chalcedonians demonstrates that the site of Byzantium, to ancient commentators, was viewed as almost the perfect location on which to found a city, fulfilling all the requirements of a group of colonists: defensibility, abundant natural resources (a fertile agricultural hinterland and lots of fish), and the potential to control shipping coming in and out of the Black Sea. This last explanation is emphasized by Polybius, who, as we have seen, depicts its location as almost the ideal upon which to found a city.[24] The story demonstrates that our sources envisaged the foundations of Byzantium, Chalcedon, and archaic Greek colonies generally as distinct historical events; not in terms of the *longue durée*, processes of evolutionary growth and development, but, in keeping with the tendency of the ancients to attribute every technological innovation to a *protos heuretes*, singular moments, the dates of which could be traced. Herodotus thought that Byzantium was founded seventeen years after Chalcedon, while the various manuscripts and editions of Eusebius' *Chronicle* give dates between 660 and 656 BC.[25] When the two are set against each other they do not correspond: Eusebius' date for the foundation of Chalcedon is 685/4, which minus seventeen years leaves a discrepancy of at least nine years between Eusebius and Herodotus.[26] The disagreement shows that the lack of consensus concerning the date did not stop ancient writers from trying to find one anyway, symptomatic of a more general tendency among the ancients to attempt to assign specific dates to the foundations of Greek colonies.

That Byzantium possessed a singular moment of foundation, as Herodotus, Tacitus, and Strabo, believed, finds its clearest expression in the various mythical stories which surround the event, most of which are preserved in the *Patria* of Hesychius of Miletus (*FGrHist* 390), written during the reign of the Byzantine emperor Justinian in the sixth century AD. This late tradition, as Katherine Clarke has shown, encompasses many of the stock themes and elements

[24] 4.38.

[25] On the dates given by this chronicle, whose Armenian translation and adaptations by St. Jerome differ, cf. *RE* III s.v. Byzantion, cols 1127–9; Merle (1916) 5–6; Hanell (1934) 126. On the complicated manuscript tradition of this chronicle, cf. Mosshammer (1979) 37–83 for an overview.

[26] Euseb. *Chron*. v. Hier. 1332 = Olymp. 23. 4 (ed. Helm).

characteristic of local Greek historiography.[27] Hesychius tells us that the initial expedition to Byzantium was undertaken by Argives at the advice of an oracle of Pythian Apollo (§3). As we know, a different Delphic oracle is found in Tacitus and Strabo, and it was a commonplace in the *ktisis* genre to tie the foundation of a city to Delphi in this way. The oracle cited by Hesychius does not mention 'the blind', but is a typical riddle, framing the site of Byzantium as an impossible paradox:

> *ὄλβιοι, οἵ κείμην ἱερόν πόλιν οἰκήσουσιν*
> *ἀκτὴν Θρηικίην στενυγρὸν παρά τε στόμα Πόντου*
> *ἔνθα δυό σκύλακες πολιὴν λάπτουσι θάλασσαν*
> *ἔνθ' ἰχθὺς ἐλαφός τε νομὸν βόσκονται ἐς αὐτόν*
>
> Blessed are those who will dwell in the sacred city,
> by the narrow Thracian shore at the mouth of the Pontus,
> where two whelps drink from the hollow sea,
> where both fish and deer graze at the same pasture.[28]

The oracle, as Dougherty notes, would have been incomprehensible to the colonists until they arrived at the site itself: dogs do not drink sea water, and deer do not graze at sea with fish. Arriving at the site the colonists chose to retrospectively interpret the Golden Horn, the Keras, in the shape of a horn, as the deer referred to, marked out by two rivers, 'pups', which flow into its northern end: the Cydarus and Barbyses.[29] Hesychius goes on to give another version: the founders were not Argives but Megarians, led by Byzas, the eponymous *oikistes* of Byzantium (§5). Finally, there is a third version of the foundation story: again Byzas is involved, not the leader of Megarians but the son of the nymph Ceroessa and Poseidon. This version likewise links Byzantium to Argos in a variation of the Io myth discussed in Chapter 1.2.

The value of these myths lies not of course in their historicity, but in the evidence they provide for how post-Constantinian Byzantines envisaged the pre-history of their city. Above all, the concern is with establishing a legendary moment of foundation to tie in with the new-found identity of Constantinople as New Rome; if possible to draw parallels between the foundations of Rome and Byzantium.[30]

[27] Clarke (2008) 169–73.

[28] This oracle is also found, with slightly different wording, in Dion. Byz. 23 and Steph. Byz. s.v. *Βυζάντιον*.

[29] For the importance of the Delphic oracle in establishing this foundational moment, cf. Dougherty (1993) 50–1.

[30] On this topic, Dagron (1984) 26, Robu (2014a) 275, and Kaldellis (2005) 396.

Numerous connections are made between the history of Byzantium and that of Rome. Hesychius gives a version of the siege of Philip II in 340 BC (§27). During the night Philip planned to undermine the city's walls in secret, but the barking of dogs alerted the Byzantines, scuppering Philip's plans and saving the city. The story is a deliberate parallel to the myth that geese woke the Romans during the siege of the Gauls. There are also seven *strategoi* of Byzantium named by Hesychius (§§6, 20, 26, 28, 31, 32, 34), leaders of the city over the course of its history, who are used to denote the various phases of the city's development until it became Constantinople. Again, these are meant to mirror the seven kings of Rome.[31] The city is even given its own Romulus and Remus in the form of the quarrels between Byzas and his brother Strombus (§§20–1), while the aid given to Byzas by Poseidon and Apollo in the building of Byzantium's walls recalls their more well-known role in the building of Troy, Rome's own legendary progenitor (§12).

The stock themes of the *ktisis* genre found in this tradition (the importance of the Pythian oracle, prodigious omens, the connection of myths to the foundation) reveal attempts by later authors to create an allegory for the birth of a city. This is precisely how the Romans, used to establishing colonies *ex novo*, envisaged the foundation of a city. There are echoes of Virgil's description of the foundation of Carthage, where the Tyrians, 'like bees', swarm around, laying out walls, marking out sites to build upon, and even setting up a senate and electing magistrates. Dido hands out laws to her people, and directs the operation as a quintessential *oikistes*, an *auctor*.[32] Likewise, Alexander was said to have set out the framework of Alexandria in Egypt by marking out lines and establishing the course of the city's walls, personally deciding on the location of the agora, the number of temples.[33] Hesychius' description of the foundation of the city by Byzas is a mirror image of this traditional conception of a foundation. Byzas, like Alexander, is said to have 'marked out lines', that is, delineate the framework of the city (§12: διέγραψεν), then after erecting the walls delimit the sanctuaries of the gods (§15: μετὰ δὲ τὴν τοῦ

[31] Janin (1964) 11. The seven *strategoi* are Byzas, Dineos the Chalcedonian, Leon, Chares the Athenian, Protomachus, Timesius, and Calliades.

[32] *Aen*. 1.420–40, 490–510. On the association between civilization and city-founding in the Roman west, cf. Woolf (2000) 120–1.

[33] Arr. *Anab*. 3.1.5; Curt. 4.8.2.

τείχους στεφάνην καὶ <τὰ> τεμένη τῶν θεῶν ἀπειργάζετο), thereby setting aside sacred, public space distinct from private areas. Byzas' foundation of Byzantium is thus securely placed within the traditional *ktisis* narrative, by which the writers of the *Patria* looked back to the Greek founder Byzas to establish the legendary history of their city. But there are no reasons that Hesychius' account of the foundation of Byzantium should be accorded any more historical worth than Virgil's of Carthage, that we should take his claims for Megarian or Argive origins seriously, or that an archaic 'foundation' should accord in any way with the foundation of Alexandria in the fourth century BC.

Yet each of our literary sources shares precisely this conception of the foundation of Byzantium as an 'event', and many cite various different mother-cities—the most important feature of the *ktisis* narrative. The earliest source to mention the origin of Byzantium's founders is the geographical work *Circuit of the World* (*Περίοδος γῆς*) by Ps.-Scymnus (probably first century BC), which refers to Megara as the exclusive founder of Byzantium (as the last of Megara's foundations after Selymbria).[34] Philostratus, too, says that Megara alone founded Byzantium.[35] The story that the *oikistes* was Byzas the Megarian appears in Stephanus of Byzantium[36] and Eustathius, in his *Commentarii* to Dionysius Periegetes.[37] Megara is also mentioned by John Lydus[38] and George Cedrenus.[39]

However, three of our weightiest sources refuse to specify Byzantium's mother-city. Herodotus, in the Megabazus passage, says simply that Byzantium was founded seventeen years after Chalcedon without any indication of the origins of the founders. Tacitus also speaks in general terms of a Greek foundation: *Byzantium in extremo Europae posuere Graeci*.[40] Strabo, like Herodotus and Tacitus, sets Byzantium alongside Chalcedon; but he specifies that the founder of Chalcedon was Megara, while speaking only generally of 'those who founded Byzantium'.[41] Excepting Tacitus, it is here that we should expect to find concrete evidence of Byzantium's metropolis, especially

[34] Ps.-Scymnus 715–16.

[35] *VS* 529: *τὰ Μέγαρα, οἰκισταὶ δὲ οὗτοι Βυζαντίων.*

[36] s.v. *Βυζάντιον.*

[37] *GGM* II §803.

[38] *De Mag.* 3.70: *Μεγαρεῖς εἰς Βυζάντιον ἀποκίσαντες.*

[39] 112A–B = p. 197, Wünsch.

[40] *Ann.* 12.63.

[41] 7.6.2: *τοῖς κτίσασι τὸ Βυζάντιον ὕστερον μετὰ τὴν ὑπὸ Μεγαρέων Χαλκηδόνος κτίσιν.* Cf. Hanell (1934) 123 and Robu (2014a) 250.

in Strabo, who takes the effort to tell us Chalcedon's. While it may be unreasonable to expect Tacitus to know (or care) which particular Graeci founded Byzantium, this is not the case with Thucydides, who was interested in precisely this sort of thing, and who had a perfect opportunity to tell us. When Byzantium revolted to the Spartan side in 411 BC, one Helixus of Megara helped to entice it. Yet Thucydides gives no mention of any ethnic connection between Byzantium and Megara.[42] That no such evidence is forthcoming suggests that, unlike Chalcedon, there was no certain tradition about Byzantium's founder even before the foundation of Constantinople, though our sources still envisage a single moment of foundation, agreeing that it was founded sometime after Chalcedon.

The other sources only complicate matters. Velleius Paterculus, who after Scymnus is the earliest source to specify the founder of Byzantium, gives a confusing reference to Miletus as the mother-city.[43] Dionysius does often mention Megara, referring to the tomb of Hipposthenes, *ἥρωος Μεγαρέως*, and the sanctuary of Schoiniklos, both of which he says came from Megara.[44] However, as Hanell notes, he does not refer *only* to Megara. Elsewhere Dionysius mentions Corinthians, saying explicitly that they participated in the foundation (*ἐκοινώνησαν γὰρ Κορίνθιοι τῆς ἀποικίας*), Arcadians (connecting a sanctuary named the Hapsieion to the supposedly Arcadian Zeus Hapsasios, though the epithet is unattested elsewhere), and Rhodians (mentioning the walls or circuit of the Rhodians, *οἱ Ῥοδίων Περίβολοι*).[45] Genesius too refers to Megarians, alongside Karystians, Mycenaeans,

[42] Thuc. 80.80.3. The fact is stressed by Meiggs (1972) 336, Hornblower, *ACT* III, 986, and Newskaja (1955) 92, in connection with Megara's claim to the foundation. Yet it may have been entirely coincidental: Megara was one of Sparta's allies, and Clearchus also had with him, as Spartan allies, contingents of Boeotians. Furthermore, Thucydides is clear about the connection between Miletus and Abydos, 8.61.1, and Thebes and Methymna, 8.100.3, both comparable occasions (and cf. the long digression at the start of book 6, setting up the ethnic connections to mainland Greece of the Greeks in Sicily), but as Hornblower notes chooses to avoid such directness here.

[43] 2.7.7.

[44] §§14, 32, 34, 53. In general, caution is required when dealing with Dionysius' mentions of supposedly Megarian heroes: cf. Miller (1897) 330. Note especially §39, on a shrine to Ajax the son of Telamon, whom, Dionysius says, the Megarians honour equal to a god. In one explanation for the aetiology of the place called Hestiai (§ 53), discussed in Chapter 5.3, Dionysius claims that the 'hearths' corresponded to the seven greatest houses of Megara.

[45] Dion. Byz. 15, 19, 47. Cf. Hanell (1934) 124.

Corinthians, and 'many others'.[46] Ammianus Marcellinus calls Byzantium an *Atticorum colonia*.[47] Sparta is claimed by Justin[48] and Orosius,[49] who say that the city was founded by Pausanias, the Spartan regent. Finally, Constantine Porphyrogenitus calls Byzantium a colony of Megara, Sparta, and Boeotia.[50]

What are we to make of this array of potential founders? A considerable majority of the sources (Hesychius, Stephanus, Lydus, Orosius, Genesius, Constantine Porphyrogenitus, Ammianus, and Cedrenus) are post-Constantinian, and the confused literary tradition is thus in part a consequence of the transformation of the city into Constantinople. Gibbon put the situation best: 'With regard to the wars of the Byzantines against Philip, the Greeks, and the kings of Bithynia, we should trust none but the ancient writers who lived before the greatness of the imperial city had excited a spirit of flattery and fiction.'[51] To the writers of the *Patria*, like Hesychius, it was necessary above all to create for the ancient city a foundation legend analogous to that of Rome, inventing myths or building on earlier myths to endow the city with a legendary back-story as a mark of Constantinople's historical identity—hence the importance of Byzas, who is emphasized in the *Patria* as the personification of the city's foundational moment. The *Parastaseis Syntomoi Chronikai* thus inflates Byzas and his fictional brother Antes (the combination of whose names supposedly created the name of the city) into opponents of Constantine, taking the place of Maxentius: the victory over Byzas thereby transfers all the legends surrounding Byzas and the pre-history of the city to Constantine, solidifying the latter's position as the 'true' founder of the city.[52] It is as a consequence difficult to separate the historical foundation from the mythical. Moreover, because of the significance of the later city, many of the claims can be discounted as no more than attempts, spurred by local patriotism, at claiming original responsibility for the city which became capital of the Roman Empire.[53] Yet this is only part of the explanation, since

[46] 12b = p. 27, Lachmann: ἄλλων τε πολλῶν.
[47] 12.8.8. [48] 9.1.3.
[49] 3.13.2. [50] *De Them.* 46 = p. 85, Pertusi.
[51] *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* II (1896, ed. Bury) 141, n. 2.
[52] *Par. Syn. Chron.* 37–8, 41, 52. See Cameron and Herrin (1984) 34–5.
[53] Byzantium's glamorous future makes it one of the best examples of Osborne's point (1998: 265), that 'with a little ingenuity even unconnected communities might

Velleius (Miletus), Scymnus (Megara), and Dionysius (various) wrote before that era of 'flattery and fiction' mentioned by Gibbon.

Another explanation is that the contradictory testimonies reflect a mixed foundation by a number of different *poleis*. This is plausible, and finds support in a passage of Aristotle's *Politics*, which, dealing with the various causes of *stasis* in Greek *poleis*, discusses an episode from Byzantium's history, when a *stasis* developed between the original inhabitants and a group of 'newcomers', *epoikoi*, who were expelled for plotting against the others. The reason given by Aristotle is 'difference of race' (*τὸ μὴ ὁμόφυλον*), saying that *stasis* is a common problem when a population introduces an external element:

> *στασιωτικὸν δὲ καὶ τὸ μὴ ὁμόφυλον, ἕως ἂν συμπνεύσῃ· ὥσπερ γὰρ οὐδ᾽ ἐκ τοῦ τυχόντος πλήθους πόλις γίγνεται, οὕτως οὐδ᾽ ἐν τῷ τυχόντι χρόνῳ· διὸ ὅσοι ἤδη συνόικους ἐδέξαντο ἢ ἐποίκους, οἱ πλεῖστοι διεστασίασαν . . . καὶ Βυζαντίοις οἱ ἔποικοι ἐπιβουλεύοντες φωραθέντες ἐξέπεσον διὰ μάχης.*
>
> Also difference of race is a cause of faction, until harmony of spirit is reached; for just as any chance multitude of people does not form a state, so a state is not formed at any chance period of time. Hence most of the states that have hitherto admitted joint settlers (*synoikoi*) or additional settlers (*epoikoi*) have split into factions . . . and at Byzantium the *epoikoi* were discovered plotting against the colonists and were expelled by force of arms.[54]

Our knowledge of this event is poor: it is undated, so we do not know if the *stasis* occurred at the moment of foundation or at some other time later. Aristotle says that the newcomers were not expelled immediately, but that they were already present at Byzantium, perhaps part of the citizenry, and then hatched a plot against the other colonists. They may have been composed of a contingent of colonists who participated, with others, in the foundation, and later, after the failure of their conspiracy, were expelled. We thus find support for the view that Byzantium was a joint foundation, though it must be qualified because we do not know when this event occurred.[55] Ethnic tensions, of course, could have flared up at any time in Byzantium's

be able to get themselves in on a city's past if there was some moment when this seemed mutually advantageous to both parties'.

[54] Arist. *Pol.* 1303a 25–35 (transl. Rackham, Loeb).

[55] On this episode of *stasis*, cf. Gehrke (1985) 34 and Robu (2014a) 281.

history, for example between earlier inhabitants and resident non-citizen merchants; and were particularly likely when the city was under oppressive foreign control, as it was at the beginning of the fourth century under the brutal Spartan harmost Clearchus.

On this view, some of the founders in the literary sources may have participated in the foundation, only to be lost among those added in by later writers. We may reject Ammianus' claim that Athens was behind the foundation as a post-Constantinian distortion: the only evidence that Athens' influence on the development of Byzantium was particularly strong are the names of two *hekatostyes* (civic subdivisions), and if Athens was involved in Byzantium's foundation, inevitably it would have made reference to the fact at various times in the fifth and fourth centuries, appealing to the mother-city–colony relationship as justification of its attempts to intervene at Byzantium or to secure the friendship of the city.[56] Purely Milesian foundation, attested by Velleius, is on the basis of the dialect improbable in the extreme; although the participation of a number of Milesians is not to be excluded.[57]

References to Sparta, however, probably possess a kernel of historical truth. We saw in Chapter 2.1 that in the summer of 478 BC Persia's control of the Bosporus was broken by Pausanias, who liberated Byzantium at the head of the allied Greek fleet. Very likely, the city was reconstructed by Pausanias. Those exiles who had fled the city to found Mesembria could return home, and Persian hostages were taken. This is the most plausible explanation of a difficult passage of Justin, epitomizing the *origines Byzantii* of Pompeius Trogus. According to Trogus, the city was first founded by Pausanias, and after its foundation he remained in possession of the city for seven years.[58] The notion that the city was originally founded by Pausanias is confusing, given that the city must already have

[56] Cf. Robu (2014a) 258, connecting Athenian involvement at Byzantium to the entrance of the city into the Second Athenian Confederacy in the fourth century, and to the aid sent by the Athenians during the siege of Philip II in 340.

[57] It is also likely that ancient writers simply expected colonies in the Black Sea and Propontis to be Milesian, so reproduced this assumption without scrutiny. So Hind (1998) 134, who notes that Miletus is similarly claimed as the mother city of Heraclea Pontica by Strab. 12.3.4, and of Callatis by Pomponius 2.22, although they are contradicted by the stronger literary tradition.

[58] Justin 9.1.3.

existed before Pausanias visited it: the city, we have seen, had been used as Histiaeus' base after the Ionian Revolt. An alteration of *condita* to *capta* had been posited to solve the problem (but leaves open the question of seven years).[59] However, an alternative was suggested by Lehmann-Haupt: Pausanias was indeed hailed as a founder at Byzantium, accorded cult and worshipped as *heros ktistes*.[60] A number of Byzantines had, following the Ionian revolt, abandoned their city and fled to nearby Mesembria, and would later have been led home from Mesembria by Pausanias to a city which had been razed to the ground by the Phoenicians.[61]

Pausanias was therefore responsible for rebuilding a city destroyed by the Phoenicians, and, in return, was worshipped posthumously as the founder of the city—he perhaps gave the city an oligarchic constitution and laws on the Spartan model, altered to a democracy when the city entered the Delian League. It has also been suggested that Pausanias took this opportunity to introduce Byzantium's iron coinage. Iron tender, as opposed to silver, was a famously Spartan idiosyncrasy, and Pausanias could have used his position in the city to introduce coinage on the Spartan model, commemorating his re-foundation of the city with the introduction of a new currency.[62] As Lehmann-Haupt observed, the whole episode is directly analogous with that of Brasidas, who was accorded the cult of a founder by Amphipolis for being its 'saviour', a kind of benefactor rather than the city's actual founder; a development which looks forward to the Hellenistic period.[63] Unlike Amphipolis, which was founded within living memory by the Athenian Hagnon, Byzantium had no historical founder with whom Pausanias would have to compete—Byzas was bound up with the legends of Io and the Argonauts, and may even have been a later invention of the Roman period.[64]

[59] Lehmann-Haupt (1921) 59; cf. Leschhorn (1984) 157–8.

[60] Lehmann-Haupt (1921); cf. Leschhorn (1984) 157–9; Robu (2014a) 257. The credit is properly Pierre Gilles', who originally made the suggestion in his *De topographia Constantinopoleos* (1561) 1.1 (Grélois, 271; Byrd, 1–2).

[61] Hdt. 6.33: *οἱ δὲ Φοίνικες κατακαύσαντες ταύτας τὰς χώρας τὰς καταλεχθείσας κτλ.*

[62] Heichelheim (1930) 22–4, tentatively, and see Leschhorn (1984) 158.

[63] Thuc. 5.11. Other analogous cases are Miltiades Senior at the Chersonese (Hdt. 6.38), Artachaees the Achaemenid, who was sacrificed to as a hero by the people of Acanthus because of his construction of a canal (Hdt. 7.117), and Hagnon, the historical founder of Amphipolis. Cf. on these examples Lehmann-Haupt (1921) 60.

[64] So Lehmann-Haupt (1921) 60. On Spartan influence at Byzantium: Robu (2014a) 256–8.

Moreover, the connection between Pausanias and the Serpent Column of Delphi may help to explain Constantine's interest in bringing the monument to his new capital. Trogus drew on a more ancient source (Lehmann-Haupt suggested Theopompus) which preserved information concerning Pausanias' founder cult. Aware of the tradition, Lehmann-Haupt suggested, Constantine could place himself as the latest in a triad of founders (Byzas-Pausanias-Constantine), in an attempt to outdo Septimius Severus' ktistic claim by associating himself with Pausanias.[65] Byzantium sided with Severus' rival Pescennius Niger in AD 193. Though Severus crossed to Asia, and defeated and killed Niger, Byzantium, afraid of punishment, obstinately resisted Severus for over two years, until it was finally defeated in AD 195. As punishment, Severus pulled down the city's walls, made it a *kome* of neighbouring Perinthus, and razed the city. However, after destroying the city, Severus was persuaded, allegedly on the advice of Caracalla,[66] to restore it, endowing it with various public buildings including the Baths of Zeuxippus and the Hippodrome. The city also seems to have been renamed briefly Antonia, in honour of Caracalla.[67] A commemorative coin, which carries a representation of Severus making an offering at an altar, and bears the legend *κτίσις*, must be connected with this event.[68] Probably, Severus depicted himself as a second Pausanias to atone for his destruction of the city, a claim taken over, and subsequently whitewashed, by Constantine.

Yet Pausanias' honours must have been posthumous; Brasidas' cult at Amphipolis was part of his funeral, and the heroization of the living Lysandros came almost a century after the expulsion of Pausanias.[69] What context best fits the creation of the cult? Byzantium swiftly passed into the hands of Athens after the expulsion of Pausanias, and remained so, with brief interludes, until the end of the Peloponnesian War, when Lysandros acquired the city. Lehmann-Haupt suggested that the cult was instituted in this period, 404/3–389, noting that the context provides a close fit with Lysandros'

[65] Lehmann-Haupt (1921) 64–6.

[66] Hist. Aug. *Car.* 1.7. The historicity of this anecdote is confirmed by the coins, which show that Caracalla held the eponymous magistracy at Byzantium between 202 and 205, during which time his bust was minted on state coins: Robert (1978) 529 n. 11; Schönert-Geiss II, 1529, 1598, with p. 37.

[67] On Severus' actions toward the city, cf. Mango (2003).

[68] Schönert-Geiss II, 1467, with p. 37; Mango (2003) 594–5.

[69] Though cf. Hornblower, *ACT* I, 449, 452–5 and Malkin (1987) 231 on the possible worship of the *living* Hagnon.

own heroization.[70] In support of his suggestion, it may be added that the regime of Clearchus, the harmost entrusted with the city by Lysandros, was brutal, and made the Spartans detested. It is possible that the Spartans encouraged the cult of Pausanias at this time to foster a better relationship between Sparta and Byzantium, allowing the Spartans to justify their oppressive actions by appealing to the ancestral (though, in this case, artificial) obligations of an *apoikia* to its metropolis. It is also worth noting that it was around this time that Byzantium first began to mint silver coinage; possibly, it was taken by Sparta as a sign that the city was slipping further away by giving up the Spartan iron tender. Pausanias' founder cult was therefore an unsuccessful attempt to pre-empt the city's defection to Athens which followed in 389, and serves to emphasize, once again, that colonial claims could be highly political.

Argive claims are also strong. Diodorus connects Byzas to the story of the Argonauts,[71] while in Hesychius' *Patria* he was related to Io, daughter of an Argive king. The recent publication of a second-century AD inscription from Tomis, which refers to this legend, attests to the popularity of this Argive legend at Byzantium.[72] Yet mythological references to the Io story might have nothing to do with Argos, despite their origin, and ought not to be taken as good evidence that Byzantium was founded as a joint foundation with the participation of Argives. As Miller argued, allusions to Io on Byzantium's coinage need reflect no more than the localization of the Io myth to the (Thracian) Bosporus.[73] Finally, even granting the possibility that the mythological coin types were intended as references to Argos, they would show only that the Byzantines *believed* that their city had a distinct foundation, with a mother-city, much as Herodotus and our other sources thought.

It is not easy, then, to reconcile our sources, and the contradictory accounts make confident modern statements about the metropolis of

[70] Lehmann-Haupt (1921) 61. This, we can now say, fits precisely with the recent re-attribution, permitted by the Hecatomnus hoard, of the famous *ΣΥΝ* coinage to the close of the Peloponnesian War: Ashton, Kinns, Kounik, and Meadows (2002); Karweise (1980); Meadows (2011) 287–93. The new context of these coins emphasizes Lysandros' stature abroad at the end of the Peloponnesian War.

[71] 4.49.1. [72] Cf. Chapter 1.2.

[73] Miller (1897) 327. On the potential involvement of Argives, cf. Robu (2014a) 273–8, who adds (275) that the preference for the story of Io also served the useful function of furnishing Byzantium with a mythological past comparable to that of Rome.

Byzantium suspect. But is it necessary to reconcile the sources? Perhaps our traditional assumptions about the nature of Greek 'colonization' do not allow for all the complexities of this phenomenon. Specifically, it may be anachronistic to view certain Greek colonies, especially those settled in the Black Sea in the archaic period, as settlements founded by any particular mother-city or -cities.

6.2 INSTITUTIONS

Connections between a city's institutions and those of its prospective mother-cities can provide additional evidence for ancient links between founder and colony, and have often been used to overcome problems with literary traditions. If we assume that the names of and traditions surrounding local institutions derived from a historical period of foundation, then institutions attested in the Hellenistic and Roman period provide a neutral, 'objective' kind of evidence for a city's foundation which is not distorted by ideology or mythological stories. On this assumption, Hanell explored the institutions of the Megarian 'colonial network' in an effort to discern which colonies Megara founded. He identified two primary characteristics of the political systems of Megara's colonies: a *basileus* as eponymous magistrate, and a council of *aisymnatai* as the executive committee of the *boula*, traits which are repeated across Megara's colonies.[74] How closely does Byzantium's constitution mirror this typical Megarian pattern?

Without compiling the evidence for each and every known institution and position in Byzantium, there are four important institutions attested in the epigraphic evidence which bear on this question. Besides the assembly and council, there was a collegium of *stratagoi* which served a sort of probouleutic function. In *IByz* 2, honours for a Milesian judge and his secretary from the mid-second century BC, it is not the *boula* which brings the motion before the people but the *stratagoi* (ll. 3–4). The *stratagoi* were likewise responsible for bringing *IByz* 3, honours for Orontes of Olbia in the mid-first century AD,

[74] Hanell (1934) 147; cf. Loukopoulou (1989b) 142–3. For more recent treatments of the Megarian colonial institutions, Nawotka (1997) 81–133, Loukopoulou (1989b) 138–48, Robu (2007/2009), (2012) 189–91, and (2014a) 325–405.

before the people (ll. 2–3), and it is they who are given responsibility to choose the ambassadors to be sent to the Kings Antigonus and Demetrius (*IByz* 4.7–8). In addition, there was a body named 'The Fifteen', *οἱ πεντεκαίδεκα* (*IByz* 1.47, 62; 2.37). This was probably the executive committee of the *boula* which ran the affairs of the city, similar to the *prytany* at Athens.[75]

The citizenry of Byzantium was divided into *hekatostyes* ('centuries', 'hundred parts'), roughly corresponding in function to the Attic demes. It is difficult to know whether these subdivisions were based on any numerical criterion, but a parallel institution at Heraclea Pontica suggests not. According to Aeneas Tacticus, a democracy was in power at Heraclea and the upper classes were about to attack it, so the popular leaders induced the people to create sixty *hekatostyes* in place of the existing three tribes and four *hekatostyes* as a means of gaining support.[76] The jump is extreme, even if we emend the previous situation of three tribes (the Doric *phylai*) alongside four *hekatostyes* to read 'four *hekatostyes to each* tribe', giving us twelve *hekatostyes*. It suggests that any original numerical connotation the divisions possessed had by this point been lost in Heraclea—and, by extension, in other *poleis*, such as Byzantium.[77]

Indeed, the real basis of the *hekatostyes* was probably territorial or ancestral, akin to the Athenian demes. When in the Hellenistic period the *damos* of Byzantium decided to honour a foreigner by granting him citizenship, the honorand was given the right to enrol in a *hekatostys* of his choice. Membership of a *hekatostys*, just like an Attic deme, was therefore a prerequisite of full citizenship. Eudamos of Seleucia, an intimate of Antiochus IV, was granted the right to Byzantine citizenship, and allowed to enrol in whichever of the *hekatostyes* he wished (*IByz* 1.60–1). Our Milesian judge, in the mid-second century BC, was given the same privilege by the same formulation (*IByz* 2.31–2), as were Orontes of Olbia and his ancestors (*IByz* 3.28–30). Ten names of *hekatostyes* are known.[78] One of these,

[75] Łajtar, *IByz*, p. 21. [76] Aen. Tac. 11.10a.

[77] Whitehead (1990) 132–3; Jones (1987) 9–10, 282; Ferraioli (2011) 26–7. For treatments of these subdivisions: Debord (1984) and, more thoroughly, Ferraioli (2011). They are also found at Samos and in Samian colonies. Loukopoulou (1989b) 140 n. 2 finds the textual emendation unnecessary. On the tribes in Megara and the colonies, cf. Robu (2007/2009) 149–55 and (2014a) 326–39.

[78] *Βαθωνήα*, *Δευτέρα*, *Καλλιχορῖτις*, *Κεραμήα*, *Κεφαλήα*, *Κρατεινήα*, *Λευκοπολῖτις* (unpublished), *Νεικατήα*, *Φιλοκτορήα*/*Φιλοκτερήα*, and possibly *Διονυσία* (*IByz*

Bathonea, is also the name of an important settlement at Lake Küçükçekmece dating back to the fourth century AD, which possessed a harbour and lighthouse. Recent excavations begun here, which have already turned up later Byzantine-era artefacts, may help to shed further light on the nature of this settlement.[79]

The eponymous magistrate at Byzantium was the *hieromnamon*. Its functions at the time of our inscriptions are unknown, but its etymology suggests that it was originally a priestly role, possibly the administrator of a shrine.[80] Aside from the inscriptions, the literary sources are emphatic. Polybius dates a Byzantine embassy to Rhodes in 220 BC as 'the year when Cothon, son of Callisthenes, was *hieromnamon* at Byzantium' (4.52.4). The document in Demosthenes' *On the Crown* (18.90–1), which we saw in Chapter 1.2, is also dated according to the *hieromnamon* at Byzantium.

That Byzantium's eponymous magistrate was the *hieromnamon*, not the *basileus*, is remarkable for a Megarian colony, for in every other Megarian colony where we have evidence, and in Megara herself, the eponymous magistrate is always the *basileus*.[81] At Megara the *basileus* was the eponymous magistrate, and his term of office was used to date public documents.[82] Chalcedon did possess a *hieromnamon*.[83] However, unlike Byzantium the *hieromnamon* at Chalcedon was not the chief magistrate but a lower official, and its eponymous magistrate was the *basileus*.[84] A *basileus*, possibly but not certainly the eponymous magistrate, is also found at Mesembria,[85] which was supposedly the product of a double process of foundation: our sources say that it was either a colony of Chalcedon (Ps.-Scymnus 739–42)

2.31–2; 30.1–11; 43.1–2; 248.2; 318.2; 319a.3, b.2; 320a.1; 378). For the divisions and their names, see Łajtar, *IByz* p. 22, Robu (2007/2009) 149–51, (2014a) 342–7. Leukopolitis is attested on an unpublished dedication: N. Fıratlı, *Ann. Arch. Mus. Istanbul* 7 (1956) 55; Robert (1959) 202, n. 5, (1978) 531, n. 25; Łajtar, *IByz*, p. 22.

[79] Aydingün and Rose (2007), Aydingün (2007), Aydingün and Oniz (2011).

[80] *RE* VIII 2 s.v. *hieromnemones* cols 1490–6; Łajtar, *IByz*, p. 25; Robu (2014a) 375–82.

[81] On the *basileus* in Megara and the colonies, see Robu (2014a) 367–75 and Carlier (1984) 478–82.

[82] *IG* VII 1–18. For a period in the third century BC, when Megara belonged to the Boeotian League, the *basileus* was temporarily replaced by an official called simply 'the archon' (*IG* VII, 210–22). Cf. Legon (1981) 55 with n. 35; Smith (2008) 109; Hanell (1934) 145; Robu (2014a) 367–75.

[83] *IKalch* 4.2; 7.2; 42.

[84] *IKalch* 7.1; 8.1; 10.13; 19.2, 5; 22.7.

[85] *IGBulg* I^2 322(2).

or of Chalcedon with Byzantium (Hdt. 6.33). Similarly, the *basileus* was eponymous magistrate at Chersonesus Taurica,[86] and in Callatis,[87] both of which, by tradition, were founded by Heraclea.[88] In Heraclea Pontica, finally, the *basileus* is also found as eponymous magistrate.[89] Attestations of the *basileus* at Heraclea and Chersonesus date from the late Roman period. It is unsatisfactory, when the *basileus* is found as eponymous magistrate this late, to explain Byzantium's *hieromnamon* by the passage of time between its foundation and the inscriptions. Evidently in other Megarian colonies the *basileus* persisted as eponymous magistrate, characteristic of even those colonies which were the products of a process of 'double' foundation. Indeed, the *hieromnamon* may reflect Byzantium's close connections with Argos, where a board of *hieromnamones* possessed responsibility for administering the Heraion.[90] The Bosporus, as we saw in Chapter 1.2, was called the 'Inachian Land' after the father of Io, an Argive king, and a river in Argos. While this may have less to do with Argos and more to do with the adaptation of the Io myth by the communities of the Bosporus, it is suggestive of ancient connections with Argos.

Furthermore, whereas Byzantium possessed *hoi pentekaideka* acting as a kind of sub-committee of the *boula*, Megara and every other Megarian colony whose internal structure is known had a committee called the *aisymnatai*.[91] We have very little information of the constitution of Selinus, a colony of Megara Hyblaea in Sicily, but even here we seem to have an attestation of the *aisymnatai*.[92] This board is found recurrently in Selymbria, Chalcedon, Selinus, and *proaisymnatai* are found in Chersonesus Taurica and Callatis

[86] *IOSPE* I² 352.56–7; 354b.4; 359.17–18, 20–1; 402.8. Cf. Latychew (1885) 285–6.

[87] *ISM* III 6, 10–12, 30, 35, 38, 44, 46. This formula at Callatis began both official decrees and decisions of local associations. Cf. Avram (2000) 85–6.

[88] Chersonesus: Ps.-Scymnus, 822–30; Strab. 7.4.2–3; 12.3.6; Callatis: Strab. 7.6.1; Memnon, *FGrHist* 434 F 21.

[89] *IHeraclea* 1.5–6; 2b 5–6; 4.6–7; 67. Cf. Burstein (1976) 20; Hanell (1934) 147–55, 156.

[90] Robu (2014a) 276–7; cf. Avram and Jones (2011) 130–1 n. 12, citing Robu. For Argive involvement in Byzantium's early period of settlement, cf. also Robu (2014a) 273–8.

[91] See Legon (1981) 56. For the *aisymnatai* in Megara: *IG* VII 15, and cf. the dubious report on the origins of this council in Paus. 1.43.3.

[92] *SGDI* 3045.5–6: . . . δαμε[νέιν τοὺς] αἰσιμνά[τ]ας . . . (this inscription dates to the sixth century BC).

(presumably these were the chairmen of this committee, like the *epistates* at Athens).[93]

On the other hand, Byzantium's *hekatostyes* seem to be characteristically Megarian, and it is easy to assume that they go back to the foundation of the city—an archaic export from the metropolis to the colonies. A Megarian called as witness to a dispute at Epidaurus is named with his personal name, his patronym, then the name of his *hekatostys*.[94] Moreover, these divisions are found elsewhere in Megara's colonial network. As we have seen, divisions named as *hekatostyes* are attested at Heraclea Pontica.[95] At Chalcedon we possess the names (or fragments of names) of thirteen civic subdivisions, given with the names of members of Chalcedon's executive council.[96] Only one of Chalcedon's divisions (*Καλλιχορεατίς*) bears any similarity to a Byzantine *hekatostys*.[97] Though Chalcedon's divisions are not explicitly named as *hekatostyes*, it is a reasonable guess considering the close connections between Byzantium and Chalcedon, and the fact that they stem from Megara.[98] That said, the existence of the *hekatostyes* is a clearly Megarian feature of the Byzantine constitution: it is suggestive of early Megarian involvement in Byzantium's history, and of historic connections between Byzantium and the other Megarian cities.

The names of Byzantium's *hekatostyes* are informative. While the institution itself is Megarian, the names of individual *hekatostyes* seem to derive from elsewhere. The Chalcedonian *hekatostys Ἀτθίς* may be indicative of Athenian influence.[99] Similarly, the *hekatostys Καλλιχορεατίς*, found in Byzantium and Chalcedon, might evoke the sacred well of Eleusis in Attica, the *Καλλίχορον φρέαρ*.[100] The

[93] *SGDI* 3068 (Selymbria); *IKalch* 7.6; 10.10; 6.1–2; 11.3, 5; 12.13 (Chalcedon); *IGDS* 28 (Selinus); *Syll.*^{3} 709 (Chersonesus); *ISM* III, 10, 12, 25 (Callatis); cf. Robu (2014a) 382–7 and Minns (1913) 540–1.

[94] *IG* IV^2 42: *Διονύσιος Πασίωνος ἑκατοστὺς Κυνοσουρί*[ς].

[95] Aen. Tac. 11.10a.

[96] *IKalch* 6–7: *Ἀσωποδω*[*ρήα*], *Ἀτθίς*, *Δίασ*[*πις*], *Δρο*[. . .], *Ἡρα*[. . .], *Ἱππωνήα*, *Καλλιχορεατίς*, *Ὀλιδυ*[*ήα*], *Παρτε*[. . .], *Πολητήα*/*Πολιατήα*, *Σειρο*[. . .], *Ποτεωι*[. . .], *Τρῖασπις*.

[97] On the possibility of connections between Byzantine and Chalcedonian divisions, cf. Loukopoulou (1989b) 141; J. and L. Robert, *BE* 1959: 252.

[98] Loukopoulou (1989b) 141; Debord (1984) 206–7.

[99] Robu (2007/2009) 159 and (2014a) 357 adds that the Byzantine *hekatostyes* *Κεραμήα* and *Κεφαλήα* may derive from the heroes *Κέφαλος* and *Κέραμος*, the eponymous heroes of the Attic demes of Kephale and Kerameis.

[100] On this, and the connection of the personal name *Καλλίχορος*, cf. Robu (2010/2011) 284–5.

Chalcedonian Asopodorea might also recall the Boeotian hero Asopos.[101] Such connections reveal the danger in assuming that a city's constitution was established *e nihilo* at one moment—even within an institution which seems to be exclusive to the colonial networks of Megara and Samos, individual names suggest that other *poleis* influenced their development over a much longer period of time.

Boards of *stratagoi*, finally, are common in Megara and her colonies. In Megara all the *proxenia* decrees attest the presence of boards of *stratagoi* which carried out non-military functions.[102] They are also found in Chalcedon and Chersonesus Taurica.[103] However, this is not a specifically Megarian institution: non-military boards of *stratagoi* are found in numerous *poleis*, and their presence in Byzantium need not be tied specifically to Megara. At Erythrai, for example, already in the Classical period an inscription from the mid-fourth century BC shows *strategoi* moving a proxeny decree before the people in the same manner that the *stratagoi* at Byzantium did.[104] The developing importance of *strategoi* from military functions to positions of civic responsibility was a common trend in the Hellenistic period, brought about by the declining importance of local standing armies within the Hellenistic kingdoms.[105] The civic responsibilities of Byzantium's *stratagoi*, therefore, are unexceptional.

Whereas the main characteristics of the Megarian political system are found in the other colonies wherever the evidence permits, Byzantium's constitution thus shows a more limited degree of Megarian influence. Moreover, the Megarian features are found in other colonies very late, right up to the late Roman period, and in colonies which were traditionally not founded directly by Megara but by intermediate colonies. We cannot explain Byzantium's unique constitution by the lateness of the sources, since much later evidence of Megarian influence exists from other colonies. This does not resemble a constitution imposed by a homogeneous group of colonists at one moment, but an amalgamation of a variety of different influences. Hanell correctly referred to Byzantium's constitutional position as a *Sonderstellung*.[106]

[101] Hanell (1934) 143; Ferraioli (2011) 57–8; Robu (2014a) 267.
[102] *IG* VII 1–9, 90–2.
[103] *IKalch* 1.73–5; *CIG* 2097.
[104] *SEG* XXXI 969.
[105] So Sherwin-White (1978) 206–7 and Jones (1940) 163.
[106] Hanell (1934) 155–6. Cf. Robu (2012) 191, who rightly notes that the colonies were unlikely to have mechanically reproduced the institutions and customs of the mother-city in their entirety.

How is this *Sonderstellung* best explained? Hanell postulated a revolutionary moment in Byzantium's history, between its foundation and our sources (the earliest source for the operation of the institutions of the city, excluding the dubious document in Dem. 18.90–1, is *IByz* 4, a decree from 306–301 BC). At this point Byzantium must have shed those institutions and officials which we could have used to tie its foundation with certainty to Megara.[107] This is procrustean, stemming from Hanell's conviction that Byzantium must have had a specific founder or founders to tie in with its distinct moment of foundation, and that based on the cultural parallels between Megara and Byzantium there was only one obvious candidate. The clear Megarian influence on Byzantium's constitution and calendar makes Megarian participation in the early period of Byzantium's settlement undeniable, but this does not tell the whole story. Megarians could, for all we know, have been mixed among settlers and merchants from elsewhere, including Athens, Boeotia, Sparta, or Argos, each arriving individually and at different moments over a period of time. Perhaps it is more profitable to rethink what we mean by the term 'colonization' in order to explain Byzantium's curious position. Moreover, institutional arrangements are not static but evolve over time: the Athenian origin of certain *hekatostyes* perhaps goes back to the fifth and fourth centuries, when Thrasybulus altered the constitution in Byzantium to a democracy, or to the expulsion of Pausanias by Cimon in the 470s.[108] More importantly, the constitution as we know it is a creation of the Hellenistic and Roman periods. Rather than providing unbiased evidence for the activities of the founders, these institutions, for all we know, were creations of a later age, designed to artificially draw attention to Byzantium's affinities with its neighbouring cities and with its metropolis. A Greek city in Thrace was by definition a colony of one of the great archaic mother-cities, and by emphasizing these affinities the Byzantines were simultaneously re-affirming their Hellenic credentials.[109]

[107] Hanell (1934) 159–60.

[108] Ferraioli (2011) 60–1; cf. Robu (2007/2009) 162 who prefers to date Athenian involvement in the Byzantine constitution to the period when the Athenians aided the Byzantines in their siege against Philip II.

[109] Cf. Chapter 5 on this topic.

6.3 SOLVING THE 'RIDDLE OF THE BLIND'

To return to literary traditions, the attitude of our ancient writers leads us naturally to a schematized view of Greek colonization. 'With the ancients, a city was never founded by degrees, by the slow increase of the number of men and houses . . . They founded a city all at once, all entire in a day.'[110] This paradigm has pervaded much of the modern literature on Greek colonization. It is traditionally maintained that a colony was founded at a certain point in time, from scratch: an 'event' rather than a 'process'.[111] Under the leadership of an oikist figure who received via an oracle the sanction of Delphi for the expedition, the group of colonists arrived at a site and set out, at one moment, the layout of the colony, taking special care to enclose the limits of the colony with a wall, and to set out public areas distinct from private space, with special attention to sanctuaries for the gods, urban and extra-urban. The classical understanding of these colonies can be found in Plato's *Laws*: a site is chosen, divided up into twelve equal parts used to assign land allotments to the settlers, sacred space set aside for the purposes of temples, and an acropolis and enclosing walls set up.[112] It should, however, be noted that all of these things could have occurred anyway over some undefined period of time; ancient and modern writers alike simply project the erection of a wall, the layout of a town plan, back to a particular moment. The most important aspect of this traditional view of the foundation of a Greek colony is that the colonists came from a particular metropolis, and that there was therefore some official purpose behind each colony.

Modern views of ancient Byzantium have tended to adopt this view, taking at face value the story that the city was founded exactly seventeen years after Chalcedon, and that the founders of Chalcedon overlooked the various advantages of Byzantium's location. Byzantium is therefore seen as a colonial foundation on the familiar pattern; a settlement established in a particular year by a specific mother-city, Megara (or a combination of named mother-cities, in a series of different 'stages' of foundation), with a named individual *oikistes*.

[110] Fustel de Coulanges (1864) 134. On colonization as a 'process', cf. Braund (1994) 74.

[111] So Malkin (2005) 71: 'No slow, evolutionary model would have fit most colonies . . . *Histoire événementielle* punctuated the long processes of ancient Mediterranean migrations'; cf. Malkin (1987) 135 and *passim*. Compare Braund (1994) 74.

[112] 745b–e.

The colonists are thought to have been sent out at the behest of their home *polis*; the foundation, under official direction and control, was intended for some benefit to the mother-city. Debates have therefore revolved around discovering the chronology of Byzantium's foundation in the context of colonization in the Black Sea and Propontis, and understanding the motives behind the colony from the mother-city's point of view. In what year was Byzantium founded?[113] Why was it founded after other Megarian colonies in the area—not only Chalcedon, according to the literary sources, but also Astacus and Selymbria?[114] A further concern has been the 'purpose' of the colony: was Byzantium intended as an outlet for surplus population at home? A means of securing natural resources? To create new commercial contacts and to solidify old ones? Political reasons? Strategic value?[115]

Various rationalizations for Byzantium's late foundation have been offered. Beloch observed that the site was suited primarily toward trade, and that trade between Greece and the Black Sea was still in its infancy in the Archaic period.[116] Malkin and Shmueli have noted the difficulties in sailing north through the Bosporus from the European side of the strait, arguing that until maritime traffic coming south was a more significant factor (that is, when Pontic trade with Greece had fully developed), Chalcedon's location was the superior site, for the Asian side of the Bosporus is better suited to beginning the passage north.[117] Carpenter argued that the strong currents of the Bosporus prevented access to the Black Sea before the development of more advanced forms of shipping in the seventh century (the invention of the pentekonter).[118] Another kind of rationalization of Byzantium's late foundation is found in attempts to rearrange the chronologies given by the sources for Megara's other colonies. Hanell, upholding

[113] *RE* III s.v. Byzantion, cols 1127–9; Busolt, *Gr. Ges.* I^2, 471–4; Merle (1916) 5–6; Hanell (1934) 126; Cook (1946) 78; Bérard (1960) 96–7; Isaac (1986) 219–22; Loukopoulou (1989b) 51–3.

[114] Ps.-Scymnus 715–16. Astacus was by tradition the earliest of Megara's northern colonies. For the date, Memnon, *FGrHist* 434 F 20 and Eusebius, *Chron.* v Hier. 1306 (ed. Helm) give 711 BC. This chronology is confused by Charon of Lampsacus (*FGrHist* 262 F 6), who says that Astacus was a foundation of Chalcedon.

[115] Busolt, *Gr. Ges.* I^2, 473–4; Newskaja (1955) 16–18; Roebuck (1959) 111; Noonan (1973) 233, 241–3; Boardman (1980) 241; Isaac (1986) 219–22.

[116] Beloch, *Gr. Ges.*^{2} I, 257.

[117] Malkin and Shmueli (1988); cf. Robu (2014a) 231–9.

[118] Carpenter (1948). This argument has been thoroughly demolished: cf. Chapter 1.1.

Charon's testimony, argued that Astacus was a colony of Chalcedon, which would make the foundation post-date that of Byzantium.[119] Similarly, Loukopoulou suggests that we discount the testimony of Ps.-Scymnus that Selymbria was also founded before Byzantium, arguing that the tight relationship and cultural parallels between Byzantium and Selymbria suggest that Selymbria was in fact a Byzantine colony.[120] Her argument, however, is an attempted rationalization of the late foundation of Byzantium in the sources: the close relationship is easily explained by the proximity of the two cities, and the cultural (really institutional) parallels by the fact that Selymbria was later absorbed into Byzantium's territory.[121]

However, are these questions, predicated as they are upon the notions of colonization outlined above, really the right ones to ask? The argument that the twentieth-century conception of an archaic Greek colony cannot any longer be accepted in every case without question found expression in an important paper by Robin Osborne, 'Early Greek colonization? The nature of Greek settlement in the West', where Osborne suggests that our modern notion of 'colonization', based as it is upon the Latin *colonia* and not the Greek ἀποικία, with its more nebulous meaning 'home away from home', carries all the wrong connotations when applied to the Archaic period.[122] Recent work on archaic 'colonization' has tended to follow Osborne's lead, eschewing the traditional 'colonial narrative' in favour of conceptions of emigration and settlement which emphasize instead the *longue durée*: processes of interaction between Greeks and indigenes, interactions between Greeks of one *polis* and others, the importance of the individual rather than the primacy of a 'state' or 'government', and the abandonment of any talk of official 'motives' such as trade.[123] As Osborne declares, 'Talk of whether or not there was "trade before the flag" is inappropriate, not because talk of trade is anachronistic,

[119] Hanell (1934) 119–22, and followed in Loukopoulou (1989b) 51.

[120] Loukopoulou (1989b) 52–3.

[121] Dem. 15.26. Roman inscriptions of Selymbria date by the eponymous magistracy of Byzantium, showing that by this period it was a *kome* of Byzantium: e.g. *IByz* S 23, with Robert (1946) 61–4.

[122] Osborne (1998); cf. also Osborne (1996) 119, 128–9. A similar case is made by Braund (1994) 73–87 to explain the foundation traditions for Colchis in Georgia.

[123] Hornblower, *ACT* III, 274–5; Owen (2005) 6–8; Purcell (2005a) 133–4; Purcell *Antiquity* 71 (1997) 500–2 but cf. Malkin (2002). Braund (1994) 84 casts doubt on the idea that colonies needed to have a 'purpose'.

but because there was no flag.'[124] If there was never any 'purpose' behind the foundation of Byzantium, then the paradox of the blind ceases to be a paradox.

The essential ground was laid by Moses Finley, in his 1976 paper 'Colonies—an attempt at a typology'. With hindsight, there is a degree of naïvety in Finley's attempt to define what constituted a 'colony' by reference to the arbitrary criterion of 'land'. As Purcell has pointed out, a universal definition is impossible, and Finley's definition would require that the word 'colony' ought only be applied to settlements whose foundation entailed the appropriation of land already occupied by indigenes, excluding, he remarks, not only most Greek colonies but also British India.[125] Such a definition would not necessarily exclude Byzantium.[126] Nor would it exclude many other Greek settlements in the Black Sea, such as Istros.[127] However, to take land as the sole criterion means that these Black Sea cities become 'colonies', whereas other Greek settlements of the fifth and fourth centuries, which more accurately fit modern understandings of the word, cease to be so.

The importance of Finley's paper lies not in his definition of a 'colony', but in the caution he urges against misuse of the word itself. A term like 'colony' carries a cluster of meanings which are associated with it: 'The nuisance is word-magic', he says, 'words unavoidably carry their semantic clusters with them, and once a settlement is labelled a colony, that word's cluster becomes attached'.[128] This carries important implications for our understanding of Megarian 'colonization' in the Black Sea. Since our idea of colonization is attached to our understanding of other, more familiar, kinds of 'colonies', such as Roman veteran colonies or, more problematically, modern kinds of colonies, such as British imperial colonies, it is unnecessarily bound up with the idea that it was a state enterprise, undertaken to serve the interests of the home city or country. Hence political, military, or economic reasons are foremost. Colonies of this kind are indeed found on documents from the late sixth century onward, in which settlers are chosen by the governmental organs of the *poleis* involved, rules concerning land division explicitly laid out,

[124] Osborne (1998) 268–9. [125] Purcell (2005a) 133–4.

[126] *FGrHist* 81 F 8. There is no reason to believe that the enslavement of the Bithynians according to Phylarchus occurred at the time of Byzantium's foundation.

[127] Pippidi (1975c). [128] Finley (1976) 174.

and military concerns apparent. The foundation documents of these cities reveal how classical colonies could resemble the state-engineered kinds of colonies envisaged above: an Athenian cleruchy at Salamis prescribes taxes and obliges military service to Athens, a Locrian law regulates in minute detail land allotments, while the foundation decree of Naupactus sets out the various conditions under which the settlers could return home.[129] It is not only modern writers, however, who can be led astray by 'word-magic', for since it was with these kinds of *ex novo* colonies that our literary sources, none of which in the case of Byzantium are earlier than the fifth century, were acquainted, they depicted archaic colonies as if they were classical foundations on this standard model, however anachronistically it can be applied to the earlier period. In fact, and as Osborne argues, it is more likely that early archaic colonies, or at least some archaic colonies, were the end result of a longer, more natural process, evolving from earlier indigenous settlements or trading stations. Not until later did it become necessary to provide a clear beginning for these cities by inventing foundation stories with all the trimmings of the *ktisis* genre, chief of which were the eponymous oikist and the divine sanction of Delphi, often also the participation of deities or heroes in the foundation. Their identity as Greek 'colonies', and, by extension, as *poleis*, thus depended on an invented past; a specified moment of foundation, with an exact date, which could help to solidify the identity of the new *polis*. Such, as we have seen, is precisely the situation found at Byzantium. Perhaps the early settlement of Byzantium evolved around clusters of wandering merchants and travellers, including many from Megara, Argos, Corinth, etc., as well as local Thracians. These groups would naturally have left their mark in the evolving city's *nomima*, dialect, or script, without superimposing their own customs wholesale and at the expense of other groups.

Purcell, protesting the old 'static' conception of urban development, has recently drawn attention to the important distinction between 'urbanization', the simple fact of physical agglomeration,

[129] The Athenian cleruchy at Salamis (*IG* I^3 1, late sixth century BC), a law of a Locrian community for settling new territory (*IG* IX I^2 3, 609, *c.*525–500), the foundation decree of Naupactus (*IG* IX I^2 3, 718, *c.*500–475 BC); cf. similarly the Athenian colony at Brea (*IG* I^3 46, 447/6 or 445 or 439/8 or 426/5 BC), the Athenian settlement in the Adriatic in the 320s (*IG* II^2 1629), or the Issaian settlers at Black Corcyra in the fourth century (*Syll.*^{3} 141). For further discussion of these documents, cf. Osborne (1998) 252–4.

and 'urbanism', which entails the social construction of the city's identity, including the creation of laws, walls, street plans, temples, etc. To separate the latter, which could be represented in the literary tradition (or on a subsequent foundation charter) as a foundation narrative, obviously mythical or otherwise, overlooks the actual nature of the former, the physical fact of urbanization, which could take place without any clear moment of 'foundation' ever occurring.[130] Purcell's emphasis of the 'dynamic' over the 'static' along with Osborne's view of archaic 'colonization' offer models which can be applied to the case of Byzantium. Though Byzantium's institutions or cults can be invoked in an effort to prove or disprove the claims of particular mother-cities, in fact it is entirely possible to explain the competing claims in the literary sources if we reject the idea of a foundation altogether. The concept of gradual development from some earlier settlement or, more likely, settlements, would allow for the accumulation of a number of different influences at Byzantium, which were then picked up on by the literary sources in their attempts to find a simple answer to the question, creating the contradictory accounts.[131]

That the ancient sources' idea of the foundation is wrong is demonstrable. Byzas and his story were not invented by later writers, for the Byzantines themselves believed that their city was founded by an *oikistes* named Byzas, who gave his name to the city. The earliest mention of Byzas is in Diodorus (first century BC), where Byzas is said to have been the Thracian king of Byzantium at the time of the Argonauts.[132] This tradition is also found in George Cedrenus, who says that Byzantium was founded by a 'Thracian king' called Byzas, or according to some Megara.[133] Paulopoulou notes that the different traditions all served different purposes: Byzas the Thracian king legitimized the city's claim to the land over its indigenous inhabitants, while the story of

[130] Purcell (2005b) 252. On the problems with dating foundations: Braund (1994) 74.

[131] Cf. Hanell (1934) 128 and Nawotka (1997) 26, who explain the contradictory dates given in the literary sources for the foundation of Mesembria as a two-staged colonization. This is an attempt to rationalize what we need not. Contradictions in the literary sources do not signify various 'stages' of foundation, only that the ancient authors did not agree on the foundation's date, yet still assumed that there must have been one.

[132] Diod. 4.49.1. Thracian connections of Byzas: Robu (2014a) 285–93.

[133] 112A–B = p. 197, Wunsch: *τὸ Βυζάντιον ὑπὸ Βύζου βασιλέως τῆς Θρᾴκης ᾠκίσθη, ὡς δέ τινες ὑπὸ Μεγαρέων*. Byzas is also described as a king of Thrace in *Chron. Pasch.* 493–4.

Fig. 6.1. Byzas. Byzantium, 5.91g. Heberden Coin Room. With permission of the Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford.

Byzas the son of a local nymph, Semestre, emphasized his epichoric connection to the area, another justificatory tactic.[134] Similarly, Byzas the demigod grounded the history of the city in the mythical, heroic past. It is not until the late Roman period that Byzas the *Greek* founder turns up in the sources. His head is found on the city's coinage from the second and third centuries AD with the legend *ΒΥΖΑΣ*, and his mother Ceroessa also seems to be represented on a number of coins (see Fig. 6.1).[135] In the Imperial period a Byzantine sophist, Marcus of Byzantium, claimed to be a descendant of Byzas.[136] However, the name Byzas is not Greek, but almost certainly was originally Thracian, as was the name of the city itself, formed from the addition of a suffix to the *Βυζ*– stem which forms the common root of a number of common Thracian or Illyrian names: Beuzas, Busa, Busia, Busio, Busidius, Buzetius, etc.[137] The name of the city is

[134] The story of Byzas' descent from Semestre is mentioned as an alternative to the Megarian tradition by Hesychius (§5). See Paulopoulou (1994) 126–7.

[135] Schönert-Geiss II, 2012–22, 2032–74.

[136] Philostratus, *VS* 528. The other references to Byzas, which variously describe him as a Megarian, Thracian, or demigod, post-date Philostratus: Steph. Byz. s.v. *Βυζάντιον*; Procop. *Aed.* 1.5; Eustathius, *Commentarii* §803 (*GGM* II). Hesychius, aside from describing him as a Megarian or the son of Ceroessa, mentions a statue set up to Byzas (§34): cf. references in the *Patria* to statues erected in honour of Byzas and his wife, Phidaleia: *IByz* 8A–B = *Anth. Pal.* 16.66–7. Ps.-Codinus, 2.86 (ed. Preger). For the various stories concerning Byzas, cf. *Roscher's Lexikon* I, s.v. Byzas, 841; Dagron (1984) 62–9; Paulopoulou (1994) 126–7; Belfiore (2009) 303.

[137] Detschew (1957) 94–5; cf. Grasberger (1888) 110, 278; Kretschmer (1925) 94–5; Schönert-Geiss I, p. 1; Isaac (1986) 218; Janin (1964) 11. An Illyrian origin for the

therefore a hangover from an earlier indigenous settlement, and Byzas a later invention to give the city a typical foundation story; part of creating a unique identity for the city by anchoring it in a legendary moment of foundation.[138] That is, the name of the eponymous founder comes from the city itself, rather than vice versa.[139]

Archaeological excavations have been unable to prove the existence of an earlier *Greek* settlement: the small amount of early Greek finds date to the late seventh century, and though an earlier settlement on the site is clear, from the discovery of pre-historic shards from the late Bronze or early Iron Age and human remains dating back to the seventh millennium BC, before the Bosporus had yet been formed, they do not demonstrate a Greek presence. Despite the claims of Akurgal and Loukopoulou, these scanty archaeological finds, consisting of a small number of fragments of Corinthian pots, do not *confirm* the late seventh-century foundation date given by the literary sources. At most they show that there was already some settlement existing at the site before this date, but it is not necessary to take the finds as showing anything more than some small degree of Greek influence—perhaps the presence of traders.[140] Rather than imagining that the city was founded from scratch at a single point in time, it is more likely that various Greeks, individuals and small groups not under the central direction of any one *polis* (but certainly including many Megarians), were attracted to this settlement for the possibilities of trade with the indigenous Thracians, and slowly a trading station arose, supplemented over time (and not in specific 'stages') by other Greek travellers and merchants who gravitated to the site and decided to remain. Probably, a large proportion of those early travellers and

name was suggested by Georgacas (1947), but the Thracian origin, following Detschew, is more likely, given the city's complicated relations with the Thracians. For the purposes of my argument it is unimportant whether the name is Thracian or Illyrian, only that it is of pre-Greek origin. Thracian roots also lie behind the names of Callatis and Mesembria: cf. Nawotka (1997) 12–13, (1994); and Detschew (1957) 223–4, 295–6. The -*βρια* termination of Mesembria, which means 'city' in Thracian, is also found at Selymbria: Nawotka (1994) 321. On Byzas, cf. Robu (2014a) 286.

[138] On the importance of these kinds of foundation stories to the identity of an ancient city, cf. Hall (2008).

[139] Plin. *HN* 4.18 and Auson. *Ordo nob. urb.* 2–3 mention an earlier settlement named Lygus.

[140] Ogan (1940) 332, Figures 2–3; Akurgal (1956) 19–20, pl. X; Fıratlı (1978) 565–74; Akurgal (1978) 38; Loukopoulou (1989b) 52–3, n. 8; Hind (1998) 132; Moreno (2008) 666, with n. 36.

settlers were Dorian, including many Megarians (perhaps a majority) as well as Argives, Corinthians, and settlers from any number of other *poleis*. As the Dorian identity of the city crystallized, the inhabitants of Byzantium began to engage in a discourse with the other Dorian cities of the Black Sea, who may have shared their dialect, their alphabet, and many of their cults. Over time, this discourse could easily have led to the exchange and spread of cults, festivals, institutions, onomastics, and stories about common descent from Megara. The Dorian cities in the Black Sea thus formed a colonial network, in which they emphasized their shared cultural heritage and distinguished themselves from the many Milesian-Ionian cities which surrounded them.[141] Such a view also takes account of the role of the local Thracians in the development of the settlement. Over time the city of Byzantium developed; its development from a village or trading station was a natural, organic process, rather than a willed one. No 'foundation' is required, nor is any mother-city or -cities. Under these circumstances, a more interesting question than 'who founded Byzantium?' is 'at what point did the Byzantines begin to view their city as a *polis*?' This process began, I suggest, when the Byzantines began to invent the stories and traditions being discussed in the present chapter, and when they began to reflect their beliefs about their origins in their festival calendar or political institutions.

This situation also explains why the ancient writers refer to so many different founders: they assumed, as did the Byzantines themselves, that the city must have been a colonial foundation on the standard model and, unable to identify who the founder was, guessed. Hence Megara, traditionally one of the two principle colonizers of the Black Sea, is mentioned most often, for its influence on the development of Byzantium's traditions and *nomima* appears greatest. Byzantium's relations with the Dorian cities in this area, including its sister-city Chalcedon, were especially tight, and the presence of Megarians amongst the early settlers at the site of Chalcedon would have left a mark on the evolving Byzantine dialect, script, and institutions. Hesychius' *Patria*, as we have seen, took as its chronological framework the *strategoi* of Byzantium: after Byzas the second mentioned is Dineos,

[141] Robu (2012) 191 and (2014a) 410 discusses the existence of this network (which he calls an '*ethnos* mégarien'). He suggests that it may have been formed consciously in an effort to instill a sense of solidarity when faced with the threat of the local barbarian tribes of the region.

a Chalcedonian who was said to have succeeded Byzas after helping him in war (§23). The name Dineos, we have seen, was also Thracian, and like Byzas himself, the legend of the Chalcedonian Dineos may be a distortion of some historical, Thracian figure.

Hanell's suggested Chalcedonian foundation remains schematic.[142] Close relations between the two cities are apparent throughout both their histories: they were said to have founded Mesembria together,[143] and Byzantium interfered in Chalcedon to set up a democracy.[144] Narrow economic connections are clear from the two cities' coinage: on the silver coinage of the fourth century BC, when Byzantine coins carried the type of a cow or ox and dolphin, Chalcedon's carried a similar type with an ear of corn instead of the dolphin, on the same weight standard.[145] A period of parallel minting in the third century BC, when the two cities concluded a coinage alliance, also demonstrates that they collaborated to guarantee the value of each other's currency within their own cities.[146] But none of these connections needs to relate to Byzantium's 'foundation'. With such a close relationship, and the sheer proximity of Chalcedon to Byzantium, it would have been inevitable that Chalcedon should exert a strong influence on the development of Byzantium if Byzantium was never really 'founded' but grew out of a number of diverse influences.

Such an explanation also accounts for the difficulties posed by Herodotus and Eusebius for the date of Byzantium's foundation. By tradition Byzantium was founded after Chalcedon, and Herodotus' seventeen years is a half generation of thirty-five years, suitable for the purpose of having Byzantium founded after Chalcedon.[147] Neither are Eusebius' dates any more than guesses. In fact Byzantium had no single date of foundation, and the charge of blindness made against the Chalcedonians is probably unfounded. If indeed Chalcedon was ever 'founded' (and it is likely that it, too, was the product of some long-term process of growth and development), then very likely there already was at the time some settlement on the site of modern Istanbul, already a 'city' *de facto*, if not yet *de iure* a *polis*.

[142] Hanell (1934) 127–8. [143] Hdt. 6.33.
[144] Dem. 15.26; Theopompus, *FGrHist* 115 F 62.
[145] The meaning of the types is discussed in Chapter 1.2.
[146] Schönert-Geiss I, pp. 78–80. For some of the connections between Byzantium and Chalcedon, cf. Fernoux (2004) 91–3 and Robu (2014c). This period of a joint monetary policy is discussed in Chapter 3.4.
[147] Seventeen years as a half generation was noted by Beloch, *Gr. Ges.*^{2} I, 220.

To seek evidence of a specific founder or founders is therefore the wrong approach, just as it is to seek out exact dates. Nobody accepts the foundation dates given in ancient sources for Rome, which were selected explicitly to make the city appear to have a specific moment of foundation, and not, as Feeney points out, 'simply a place that evolved in a bumbling kind of way'. Feeney goes on: 'For a start, Rome was not *founded* anyway. The whole issue is a mirage. Large-scale processes over long periods of time eventually led to what we could call a civic organization on the hills beside the Tiber, but this is not a "foundation", certainly not in the terms preserved in the literary tradition.'[148] These sentiments are equally applicable to the foundation of Byzantium, and by extension to other archaic Greek colonies *except* where we possess any evidence to think that the situation was otherwise (e.g. where the literary tradition is not so contradictory, or there exists a contemporary foundation charter). The more profitable method is to envisage no single moment of foundation, but to analyse the connections between Byzantium and other cities in determining the various influences which directed the development of Byzantium and shaped its political institutions, cult practices, calendar, naming conventions, etc.

This approach gives an important insight into the expression of the city's identity through how its past was perceived and manipulated. As Clarke says, 'time is "made" in these different contexts, rather than simply being a given, and the choices about its structuring and expression therefore say something about the aspirations, affiliations, self-perception of those who make it'.[149] If the Byzantines constructed their past in the form of myths and foundational stories, that served a purpose; just as it did to the later writers like Hesychius who endeavoured to provide Constantinople with a pedigree equal to that of Rome. The various elements of the *ktisis* genre had a practical purpose: the possession of an *oikistes*, a single mother-city (even if ill-defined), a date of foundation, and institutional connections with a mother-city were all marks of the identity of the city as a *polis*. Contradictory foundation stories could also be practically useful: perhaps the Milesian tradition was invoked when Histiaeus of Miletus occupied the city, the stories of Pausanias as founder used to smooth Byzantine-Spartan relations in the period when the city was occupied

[148] Feeney (2007) 91, 93. [149] Clarke (2008) 173.

by a Spartan garrison, and the Boeotian claim recalled in the late fourth century to justify Byzantium's membership of an alliance headed by Thebes. Furthermore, if the Byzantines of the late fifth century decided to incorporate on their city's coinage an archaic version of the Megarian beta, it proves that the Byzantines of that period believed that they had been founded by Megara, however haphazardly the city really evolved. Similarly, the use of an archaic alphabet derived from Megara's would be entirely natural if a large number of these early inhabitants derived from Megara.

The mythical foundation stories discussed in this chapter are all artificial contrivances used to create or maintain a certain kind of identity for the city. Because they are consciously manipulated they cannot be taken as evidence for the 'historical' foundation, only for the retrospective creation of the city's legendary past. However, it has been argued by Malkin, and accepted implicitly in much of the literature, that a city's *nomima*—its cults, institutions, dialect, calendar, etc.—constitute a positivistic kind of objective evidence which can be used to identify a city's mother-city.[150] This may of course be true in some cases, but it is not the case that a city's *nomima* are inherently objective. As Malkin himself notes, ephors are found in Sparta, Cyrene, Thera, Taros, Heraclea, and elsewhere; an indication of some kind of interconnectivity independent of the literary tradition. Ephors, however, Malkin notes, were not instituted in Sparta until the sixth century, *after* the colonies had been founded, so the colonies must have taken the conscious decision to adopt them at some time later than their 'foundation', perhaps, as Malkin says, to reaffirm a mother-city–colony relationship.[151] Despite his earlier claim, this is decisively *not* neutral evidence: if a city wanted to claim itself as a colony of another city, what better way than to adopt a certain cult or institution of that city in order to claim a shared heritage?

In the case of Byzantium, the geographical situation of the city and its natural advantages confused our ancient sources. Their conception of colonization could not accommodate a model in which 'natural advantage' never came into question, for the foundation was never a planned or directed enterprise. Megara's influence on Byzantium's civic development is incontrovertible, and no doubt Megarians

[150] Malkin (2005) 67–8. [151] Malkin (2005) 69.

comprised a large proportion of the early Greek settlers in the region. As such, Byzantium can be safely called a 'Megarian' colony. But this does not mean that we need to ascribe to a foundation at a specific time (or times) and by specific founders. The dialect and script show that many of the early inhabitants at the Bosporus came from Megara or descended from Megarians. But they do not demonstrate a distinct foundation, at which point the institutions, cults, and calendar of Megara were mapped out in their 'pure' form, only to devolve away from this original model over time. On the contrary, the process was the reverse: the *nomima* may have developed in conscious imitation of the Megarian model. This does *not* mean to say that I am denying the existence of a Megarian 'colonial network', consisting of cities connected culturally and institutionally by the *nomima megarika*, and which is the underlying contention of Robu's recent monograph on Megara and its colonies: the onomastic, institutional, and religious affinities are clear. Rather, I am suggesting that such evidence does not provide a foolproof method for determining the identities of colonial founders, or even to conclude that the foundations were organized in any coherent way. Far from objective, *nomima* were subject to conscious manipulation and evolved over the centuries. They threaten to mislead us into simplification; into making confident assertions about 'events' which were instead much more complex processes. The Osborne model of colonization is entirely compatible with the existence of groups of colonial networks like the group of Megarian settlements.[152] Features of the *nomima* which evolved over the centuries *after* early archaic settlement, and which tied together the *poleis* belonging to this 'colonial network', might of course go back to a historical period of settlement (for example the Doric dialect or archaic script); others might belong to much later periods, while others might have been consciously preserved precisely *because* they were thought to recall the memory of the original founders. Instead of being caught in the same trap as our sources, in an effort to rationalize disparate ancient traditions and to assign dates or founders, it may be more profitable to accept that the riddle of the blind cannot be made to fit old models of Greek colonization. By exploring alternative models of settlement, we might make some progress at solving the riddle.

[152] *Contra* Robu (2014a) 411.

Conclusion

Along the banks of the Bosporus, at the confluence of the rivers Cydarus and Barbyses, the Emperor Constantine selected as the site for his new city the same famous spot beside the Golden Horn which had been praised a millennium before by Megabazus, and which the Delphic Pythia had alluded to in an obscure riddle. On 11 May AD 330, Constantinople was consecrated; here the history of the city of Byzantium ends, and the history of the Byzantine Empire begins.

This book has explored aspects of the history of the city and the strait over a period of around 1,000 years. In it, I have attempted to illustrate what the history of Byzantium and the Bosporus adds to our understanding of the ancient world. Beyond this, I have also attempted to emphasize the value of regional studies as a useful way to gain a fresh perspective on wider topics and phenomena. Why Byzantium? The first and most obvious reason is the availability of the evidence. As regards physical evidence from the Bosporus, the situation is poor. The long occupation of the site of Byzantium has destroyed any chance of extensive archaeological findings from the city, leaving only epigraphic and numismatic evidence to form the core of our reconstruction of Byzantium's history. Textually, however, we possess Dionysius' *Anaplous*, a remarkable and unique ancient text. Hitherto, the only use made of Dionysius has been for his valuable (but passing) remarks on historical episodes, or for the reconstruction of the region's ancient topography. Yet the true value of the work remains hidden; its potential untapped. As I have attempted to show throughout this book, the intimately local details provided by Dionysius concerning local myths and aetiologies offer a glimpse into how the identities of ancient Greek communities along the Bosporus were constructed, and his focus on local geographical

phenomena such as the currents and winds of the strait provide a nuanced picture of the way this region 'worked'.

Thanks to Dionysius and other evidence, especially the local inscriptions, the history of Byzantium can, uniquely, be explored from the perspective of the relationship between a city and a strait. The future site of Constantinople, Byzantium was an important city in the Classical and Hellenistic periods: Athens' interest in Byzantium in the fifth century, the use of the Bosporus to blockade Athens' grain supply at the close of the Peloponnesian War, Philip II's seizure of the grain fleet at Hieron, and the interest of the Ptolemaic kingdom in the strait in the third century are only some examples of the influential economic and strategic role played by the strait on the international scene. Traditionally, the city's wealth and influence has been attributed to Byzantium's dominance of the Bosporus, which gave the city strategic advantages and the ability to tax the strait; or to the constant trade, especially the grain trade, between Greece and the Pontus, which stimulated the regional economy. As I have attempted to show in this study, Byzantium's economic importance was rooted ultimately in local phenomena, and can only be fully understood from the perspective of the relationship between city and strait.

In the first half of Chapter 1, therefore, I explored the pervasive impact of the geographic and hydrographic features of the Bosporus, which are emphasized in Dionysius' treatise. The dangerous currents and winds in the region, the nature of the winding, narrow strait, the precipitous shoreline, and the abundance of sheltered harbours along the length of the strait, meant that large fleets passed through the strait in convoy, with numerous stops. These convoys constituted a unique local resource, and had a defining impact on the region's history, creating a spectrum of potential responses: the fleets attracted pirates, they required a protector or benefactor, and they allowed the region to be used for the taxation of Pontic trade. As a particularly revealing case study, the ancient history of Byzantium and the Bosporus therefore illustrates how local geographical features can be used as tools of historical explanation. In this case, local features which usually escape recognition bear responsibility for transforming the Bosporus as a region into an attractive economic resource to outside powers like the Athenians or the Ptolemies, while also facilitating Byzantium's profitable fishing industries.

As an explanatory tool, the relationship between city and strait can also be used to understand the self-representation of the Bosporus

communities. In the second half of Chapter 1, I used Dionysius and other sources to demonstrate how the identities of the communities living along the Bosporus were orientated around local geographical features: epichoric myths and legends, such as the Argonautic voyage or the passage of Io, which often took the form of geographical allegories, bound the region together, and permitted Byzantium to depict itself as the inheritor of Argonautic traditions, as the 'guardian' of the strait. Greek 'identities', Dionysius makes clear, were complex, multi-layered, and, above all, social constructs, artificially manipulated. We rarely get a glimpse of the true extent to which Greek communities constructed their identities at this local level, yet Dionysius' text offers what may be the most detailed ancient example of the phenomenon.

One way in which this monograph contributes to our understanding of the ancient world is by reinforcing the importance of a local perspective for wider themes and topics. Local histories have more to offer than the uncritical accumulation of evidence bemoaned by Moses Finley. By selecting significant geographical features, whose impacts are observable and measurable over long periods of human history, it is possible to gain an understanding of ancient evidence which would be impossible in a more general treatment. Indeed, if much of the argument presented in *The Corrupting Sea* is accepted, then perhaps one way forward for historians of the ancient world is to begin by defining appropriate regions. The economic realities of each region can then be established and fit into a wider network of exchange connecting the ancient world, accounting for an unlimited number of local specialisms and resources. The way in which this work envisages the relationship between a strait and its inhabitants provides one example of a way to define a region. As a unifying theme, the relationship between Byzantium and the Bosporus has been used throughout this study to select topics for examination. By its nature, this book is therefore *selective*. There are many topics which could have been included in this study of Byzantium, and some readers might lament their omission: Byzantium's history in the later part of the Hellenistic period, or its relations with Rome; the city's position in the later Roman Empire and the choice of the site by Constantine; local onomastic patterns; a more detailed exploration of the city's numismatics; a treatment of the agricultural hinterland of the city in Thrace. I have avoided some of these topics because they have already been explored in detail by other scholars (for example

Firatlı and Robert's book on the funerary *stelai* covers in detail the city's onomastics, while Schönert-Geiss' volumes on the local civic coinage with Marinescu's die-study of the Byzantine Lysimachi cover the numismatic history of the city). Other topics I have ignored because the evidence is poor, while others have been passed over if they do not bear on my primary theme. As such, there is no pretension that this is in any way a last word on Byzantium, and I will be satisfied if my approach prompts debate about the city or sparks new questions. No attempt has been made to comprehensively document every aspect of the region's history. Each topic chosen for exploration, each chapter, has been designed to flesh out the various aspects of the relationship between city and strait, and to illustrate not only aspects of the local history of this region, but also to use the unique insights provided by local history into topics of much wider significance.

By its nature this kind of study it is subjective, for the 'view from below' does not appreciate every single aspect of wider phenomena, focusing instead on the immediate local context. Yet, as I have attempted to show, this perspective can often provide new ways of reconsidering old topics. Below I summarize the wider topics which the history of Byzantium and the Bosporus can shed light on, and point out some directions which future research on these topics might take.

Chapter 2 illustrated the extent to which the Delian League, in the fifth century, involved itself in the Bosporus, outlining the scale and nature of the imperial institutions established there. By exploring Athens' actions in the Bosporus within their local cadre, it becomes possible to gain a fresh perspective on the nature of imperialism in the ancient world. Athens' involvement, I argued, ought to be seen as a sensitive response to local circumstances: the imperial power was attempting to legitimize the exploitation of the fleets of ships passing through the strait. In this way, it was doing simply what Histiaeus, Pausanias, or Clearchus had done, and Philip II and the Byzantines themselves would attempt to do: monopolize the means of extortion in the region and force the fleets to pay a toll. Such an intense level of imperial involvement reveals that the nature of the strait, which encouraged the seasonal passage of large fleets of ships, had transformed the region itself into an economic resource—control of the region brought with it control of Pontic trade, and the ability to profit from that trade or to deny access to others. Moral condemnation of Athenian 'imperialism' is inappropriate, for Athens' actions were

merely the logical response to control of this region. Moreover, Athens' actions illustrate the flexibility of the Athenian Empire, and its willingness to adapt to local conditions. Future explorations of Athenian imperialism might attempt to understand Athens' actions from a local perspective by assessing whether the policies of the empire were determined from above, by Athenians in the assembly out of touch with circumstances in the allied cities, of if they were directed by 'local specialists', men familiar with local peculiarities and who were willing to exploit local opportunities, as occurred at the Bosporus.

The currency system established at the strait in the third century was explored in Chapter 3, and characterized as an extension of the Athenians' policies, undertaken this time by the local communities with the aid of the Ptolemies. 'Closed-currency' systems, or monetary monopolies, were rare in antiquity; difficult to implement, they required that the state or government implementing the system possessed the political authority to compel merchants to accept a forcible reduction in the value of their currency. This is why the only clear examples of such systems from the Hellenistic period are, with the exception of the Bosporus system itself, the policies of Hellenistic kings carried out within their kingdoms, for only kings possessed the political authority to enforce such a system. At the Bosporus, however, it was possible, with the support of the Ptolemies, to establish an analogous system. This provides a fresh perspective both on ancient currency systems, and on the 'complexity' of the ancient economy. We learn from the Bosporus system that closed-currency systems in antiquity were rare because the market could not bear them. To work, either the actors involved had to possess the sheer political clout to compel merchants into acceptance of the system, or local circumstances had to create a 'perfect storm' which could permit the creation of such a system. Ideally both criteria were present, as in the case of the Bosporus. The regular, seasonal passage of fleets of ships in the Bosporus meant that for merchants wishing to trade with the Pontus it was inevitable for them to spend extended stops at local harbours. As a consequence, the merchants could not simply choose to bring their coin elsewhere—instead, the cities could count on the guaranteed influx of silver into local harbours to support their coinage system. However oppressive this protective tariff might have been on the traders, they could not simply choose to go elsewhere without undertaking greater expense. In this case, the Bosporus currency

system illustrates that the ancient economy could, in areas where local circumstances forced communities to adapt to exploit their environment in this way, attain a remarkable level of planning and complexity.

In Chapter 4, I explored another local economic resource: the large shoals of fish which migrated through the Bosporus at regular intervals. Fishing, I argued, was a significant economic activity in the region, encouraging the *polis* to step in to regulate the industry, defining even the national character of the inhabitants by becoming a regional quirk. Yet the local evidence must be properly contextualized; the level of economic specialization in the ancient world was such that the large surpluses of fish exported from Byzantium, Gades, Istros, Iasos, and elsewhere were products of very specific local circumstances. Fishing monopolies, state contracts leased to fishing guilds, and coastal emplacements were not ubiquitous; as Lytle has shown, they instead existed *only* in regions in which migrating shoals could be caught from the coast, in madragues and beach seines, and could not have arisen in the majority of regions dependant on open-sea fishing. To build a comprehensive picture of ancient fishing as an economic activity, it is therefore necessary to reconstruct the varied contexts in which fishing took place, and future research might proceed on a comparative basis by identifying and exploring those regions which, like the Bosporus, enjoyed an exceptionally bountiful fishing industry.

A final thread tying my study together is the way in which Greek communities envisaged and crafted their identities, that is, the distinction between the discourse in which the locals engaged in and their day-to-day realities. Here, again, my treatment has been shaped by the relationship between strait and city. In Chapter 6, I attempted to explain the difficult literary traditions behind Byzantium's foundation. The city's commanding position on the Bosporus and the city's natural opportunities, our ancient sources thought, made Chalcedon's prior foundation a riddle. The geography of the region therefore contributed to the confused and contradictory literary tradition for archaic colonization in the region, for our sources could not understand how a group of settlers could overlook a site so superb. What this suggests is that our sources' conception of Byzantium's foundation, and more generally of archaic colonization, was anachronistic. Greek colonies, I argued, especially Pontic colonies, should not be seen in one-dimensional terms. To characterize a city's

'identity' as exclusively Megarian, Milesian, Corinthian, or Samian is to simplify much more complicated phenomena. Colonial identities remained important through the Roman period, but the ways in which Greek cities tied themselves to prospective mother-cities through foundational narratives or the preservation of *nomima* was not necessarily a practice that went back to the moment of foundation. Instead, the traditions and institutional links were social constructs, invented or selected for preservation at a time subsequent to the foundation in order to reinforce the connection with the mother-city. This was done to tie the city to a heroic, legendary past, and to add depth to a mythological history; to give the city the trappings of a Greek *polis*, which for a city in the Pontus or Propontis included a clearly defined mother-city; to use these traditions to ingratiate the city's elites with the Hellenistic kings or the Romans; or, in the case of Byzantium, to create a legendary background for Constantine's New Rome. As a consequence, foundational traditions, institutions, and *nomima* do not provide reliable evidence for the archaic period of colonization. Instead, they are useful indicators of the artificial nature of colonial identities, representing what (and only what) the communities chose to represent; that is, they show us whom the local communities *thought* they descended from, or whom they *wanted* to descend from, which could be different at different periods of time.

An extension of this theme, which I discussed in Chapter 5, is the way in which the Greek inhabitants of the city defined their own Hellenic credentials in contrast to the barbarian Thracians who surrounded the city. To outside observers like Xenophon or Polybius, Byzantium stood as a bastion of Hellenic civilization. The city, we saw in Chapter 6, no doubt originally grew up around native settlements, as Greek merchants and settlers arrived and mingled with the Thracians: the city's name, or the name of Byzas, serve as reminders of the original nature of the city. Yet to justify their control of the strait, or to make Byzantine fish look more attractive, it became necessary for the Byzantines to distance themselves from their barbarian neighbours; to exaggerate their own 'Greekness', and to emphasize the level of conflict between Greeks and non-Greeks. It was as a consequence that stringent citizenship requirements defined the Greek population and the non-Greek; and it was to exaggerate this aspect of their identity that the Byzantines preserved a 'pure' Doric dialect and festival calendar. Yet as we have seen the distinction was skin-deep; in reality, the citizenship requirements may not have

been so discriminatory, and the Thracians worshipped their own gods at the same shrines as Greeks. Once again, the 'Greekness' of the Byzantines was an artificial identity, exaggerated for ideological reasons, and to perpetuate the city's reputation as the guardian of the strait.

Though this book has covered a span of a millennium, it has not paid much attention to chronological order or to traditional narrative history. It has also invoked a wide variety of sources without always justifying the methodology employed: the evidence of the second-century Dionysius is sometimes used alongside classical sources or later Byzantine *Patria* accounts; comparative evidence is sometimes used alongside local evidence. Of course there are few alternatives to what may seem such a reckless use of evidence given the poor availability of our sources. The questions which I have asked of this evidence, however, and the conclusions which I have attempted to draw, concern historical continuities and trends over a long period of time: the nature of economic exploitation and predation in this region, and Greek cultural and ethnic identities. These themes can only be examined over a long period of time, using sources which span many years. By asking the 'right' questions, I therefore hope to have at least begun to overcome this difficulty.

Furthermore, it may be objected that without a chronological arrangement there can be no outline of historical development, and the only true context of my sources is a local one, so as a result the conclusions can never have more than local significance. While the study might say much about the Bosporus, does it really say anything of wider significance? In each chapter I have endeavoured to not only outline the history of the Bosporus, but show what the local history of this region, by offering a unique and underutilized perspective, can tell us about themes and topics of much wider significance: the attitudes and rationale behind ancient imperialism; the complex nature of ancient communities' identities; the nature of 'independence' in the Hellenistic world; coinage systems in antiquity; the level of economic specialization in the ancient world; archaic colonization. In what directions might future research develop from these conclusions? Aside from encouraging other appropriate regional studies, I hope that future treatments of these topics can be investigated with greater appreciation of local variation, for it is only in this way that generalization can be avoided.

In any case, if the only true context for evidence from the Bosporus is the Bosporus itself, then it is superficial to attempt to dislodge the material and use it in a more general treatment without first understanding its proper, physical context. The mountains and rolling plains of European Thrace; the harbours and promontories of the strait; the shoals of fish and the locations of fishing emplacements; the course of the Cydarus and Barbyses; the expanse of Byzantium's *peraea*, and its echoes in local epigram. These are the only proper contexts of our evidence from Byzantium, and perhaps the only way to avoid misleading, generalizing assumptions is to embrace these features; to work from the ground up. In this way, a vibrant, living picture of the ancient world is possible, which can begin to comprise the hidden, deeply buried contexts of which we are usually ignorant, and which we tend usually to ignore. I offer the case of Byzantium and the Bosporus as one particularly vivid example of the applications of this approach.

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